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Happy returns, NAB

The National Advisory Body celebrated the anniversary of the first meeting of its committee this week. Officially, therefore, it is a third of the way through its three-year term. But as the qualification "interim" disappeared almost immediately from the NAB's title, it will probably be around for much longer than that. Indeed the NAB will probably survive in approximately its present form until it moves into much closer association, if not outright amalgamation, with the University Grants Committee - which is another way of saying a very long time.

Despite the likely longevity of the NAB, its first birthday does offer an opportunity or a pretext to review its record so far. The first and perhaps most important thing to be said in the NAB's favour is that it has turned out to be a much more decisive body than anyone imagined a year ago. After all, the common expectation was that it was such a child-like compromise that it would be incapable of swift action, that it was such a prisoner of special interests (ie "them") that it would be unable to make clear and good decisions, and that the absence of adequate representation of academic interests (ie "us") would make any decisions that the NAB did take unsound and ineffective.

None of these criticisms have turned out to have much substance. The NAB has been shown to embody a skilful compromise of interests which has obliged both the Department of Education and Science and the local authorities to come to terms with issues which previously they had ignored. The "special interests" have found themselves as much the prisoners as the jailers of the NAB. Finally the body has devised procedures to give weight to academic judgments that seem to be half-way acceptable.

The result is that the NAB has enjoyed unexpected successes during its first 12 months. It has effectively taken over the machinery of course approvals, including the most immediately urgent issue of under-subscribed courses. This was a calculated risk because it could very easily have led to headlines about "NAB hit-lists". In fact careful handling of this difficult issue has placed greater emphasis on the NAB's success in persuading the DES to lift its moratorium on approving any new courses, and its medium-term intention of replacing course-by-course approval with a broader (and theoretically more liberal) system of programme scrutiny.

The NAB has also moved quickly to dominate the central policy area of the determination and allocation of the advanced further education pool. Again, with reasonable success. It has managed to avoid over-identification with the cuts: begun to lack-

le the explosive question of uneven unit costs (although not fast enough for some in low-cost institutions who believe that a bigger stick should have been taken to high-cost ones); and launched a planning exercise which is more open and more organized than any previously attempted in the non-university sector.

So the NAB has had a good first year. Mr Ball and his colleagues on the NAB's officers should be given proper credit for their work. For there was never any chance of a honeymoon. The controversial origins of the NAB and the sharp contraction of higher education on which the Government has continued to insist made that impossible. Instead of enjoying a honeymoon, it has had to lay old and troublesome ghosts (if such a mixed metaphor can be allowed). In retrospect one of the most significant early successes of the NAB may be to have shifted the territory and policy and debate away from the arid land of models A versus B, local authorities versus their polytechnics.

If there must be any criticism of the NAB's performance so far, it is probably that it has tried too hard. For example, it is still not clear why so early in its life and pressed by so many urgent problems the NAB should have got embroiled in the tricky issue of two-year degrees/diplomas.

Even if the balance of British higher education could be shifted from three to two-year courses it would take ten years; the NAB must produce a defensible strategy for the polytechnics and colleges in as many months. It still seems a strange diversion, politically hazardous when there was no pressing necessity and defensible only perhaps in terms of long-term consciousness raising (to divert attention from short-term cuts) - but that would be much too cynical.

However, the main question mark must be over the NAB's present planning exercise. The intention is to get each institution, local authority, and (possibly) regional advisory council to establish their own priorities, and then for the NAB to sort them all out and come up with a national plan. This would then become the basis of the allocation of the pool and also for the approval of courses and programmes of work within institutions.

The drawbacks are many and obvious. Many institutions and local authorities will fail to establish priorities, either because they will not or because they cannot. Some local authorities will jump the gun and do silly, or vindictive things. The NAB will be forced to make arbitrary decisions (to close the four or five most vulnerable colleges of higher education, or to squeeze the high-cost polytechnics harder?) which may

sit uneasily with the apparent elaboration of the preceding planning exercise. At some stage considerations of quality are going to get thrown out of the window, to be replaced by those of politics.

Even if it all comes off, the NAB is going to be the uneasy possessor of a power over the non-university sector which many institutions and local authorities are going to resent. It will be a power far more direct and detailed than the influence exercised over the universities by the UGC. If a polytechnic or college deviates at all from the blueprint that the NAB has drawn up for it, it can be whipped back into line by the application of the course approval system. At least in theory, no one will have the power to second guess the judgment of the NAB.

Yet to write on these terms may be to mistake the true importance of the planning exercise. Although the NAB has already set unexpectedly high standards of administrative openness and competence, it would be wrong to judge the present exercise simply in terms of managerial efficiency. For it is inevitable that at the institutional grassroots many of the NAB's preoccupations will appear "academic" in a pejorative sense. Of course it is impossible to devise in little more than a year a plan for the non-university half of higher education that combines administrative convenience, financial feasibility and academic constraints as any NAB grand scheme influences as any NAB grand scheme influences.

But the work of the NAB should be judged in broader terms. The planning exercise can be regarded as part of the long-term education of the polytechnics and colleges because it will help to make all those who work in them conscious of the problems and opportunities facing the sector. But if the NAB is engaged in psychological as much as physical planning, the tone of its formal decisions and less formal pronouncements is especially important. Secondly, whatever the immediate outcome, academic and financial planning will have been brought closer than ever before in this sector. In the long run that must be of benefit. Finally, the external political dimension can hardly be ignored. If the NAB approach convinces the DES that the polytechnics and colleges are now subject to purposeful national planning, they are likely to be treated less harshly and arbitrarily in future.

So perhaps it is not wrong to wish the infant NAB many happy returns on its first birthday. At the start of what must inevitably be a very difficult second year, the decision of the voluntary colleges to come aboard is a welcome and significant vote of confidence - one which on the record so far is deserved.

Called to account

The University Grants Committee's efforts to enforce its student targets have produced understandable anger in most of the universities now being called to account for overspending in 1982. All are making reasonable progress, however reluctantly, towards their allotted numbers and certainly could not be accused of ignoring UGC advice. Yet several now face the prospect of grant penalties next year if the committee is not satisfied with their explanations.

It may be that the UGC does not expect to carry out its threat, surmising that the sight of the stick will be enough to bring the tardy few into line, or at least to satisfy members that the slippage is only marginal and the right result will be achieved in the end. But the exercise does raise two important, interrelated points of principle about the way in which the UGC conducts its business.

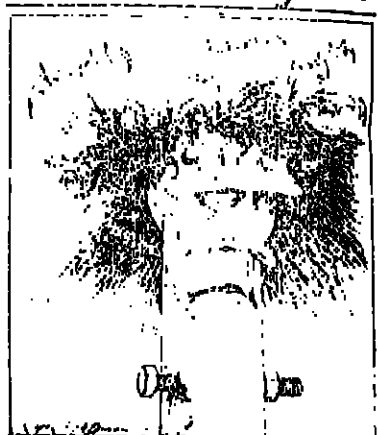
The first concerns the correlation between student numbers and quality. There is a good case, loudly championed in some of the universities cut most heavily by the UGC, that staff/student ratios could be stretched somewhat without endangering standards. This, after all, is what has happened in the public sector without noticeable ill-effects: indeed, the institutions have been congratulated by Mr William Waldegrave for their actions. It would not be necessary to make a fundamental move towards staffing levels accepted in other countries for some universities to follow suit.

Sir Edward Parkes appeared to have conceded the point when he told the Select Committee on Education that sanctions would be applied only if the UGC believed high admissions were causing reduced

standards. Unfortunately, however, the present system does not permit such flexibility. The combination of grants and fees which the UGC is obliged to employ drastically reduces the leverage available on student numbers. Quite apart from the effect on student grants, the committee has to remember that each extra home student means £480 less to be distributed elsewhere.

When the Government is calling for more variety among the universities and maximum value for money, such a straightjacket cannot be sensible. By halving home fees last year and freezing them this, ministers have already begged the question of why they should not be abolished. It would make the job of the UGC simpler and more efficient if the trend was taken to its logical conclusion.

Laurie Taylor



Department of Theology
February 4
Anno Domini 1983

My dear Vice-Chancellor,
Re: Information technology and new blood appointments
Thank you so much for your recent circular letter referring to the above matters.

First, may I turn to new blood? As you will know the average age in this department is now 63.7. It is only fair to point out the Reverend Doctor Fleecingham is still only 57, while matters are seriously unbalanced - I speak statistically - by the occasional part-time presence in the Department of Professor Lambing (74). But overall, I believe our case to be self-evident.

If our bid for a new blood appointment were successful, then we would envisage the successful applicant contributing primarily to the compulsory course on Eschatology. This, as you will recall, has been under some pressure in recent years, largely as a result of our decision to extend it to a three-term course after a Departmental Meeting in 1979 drew up what we believed to be a more comprehensive list of Last Things than had previously been encompassed by the syllabus.

We could also do with a little new blood on the Problem of Evil third-year option course, although there is now less urgency about additional teaching on first-year Old Testament. Following the return of Doctor Penstock from his three-year sabbatical period in Nevada.

I should also mention that I have received a request from Doctor Ramussen for at least some new blood on his Transubstantiation Option - but quite frankly - and I hope you'll treat this request in confidence - I'm very loath to do anything whatsoever to help Doctor Ramussen resist his quite unforgivable behaviour towards recalcitrant students on the Doctrine of Atonement course.

May I now turn - I confess, with a certain amount of eagerness - to the references in your circular to "priority being accorded to those departments which were able to show evidence of current involvement in information technology". And it is here that I wish to refer to Doctor Shearing.

Although Doctor Shearing has been primarily responsible in the last four decades for the compulsory part of our much-admired *Whir Whorl St Paul's Epistles?* course, he has increasingly taken on an interest in audio-visual material.

Last week, however, there was a further development. Several of us accepted an invitation to Doctor Shearing's home, where he displayed for us his new Baird Video-Cassette Recorder (VCR). It was a most stimulating occasion and there were few who failed to admire his remarkable dexterity in the manipulation of such features as Rewind-Eject and even (by way of an encore) Freeze Frame. It was a moment when the succinct reference in your circular to the need "for the academic community to engage in a fundamental re-orientation which allows it to come to terms with the major developments in information technology" came vividly to mind.

These are, as you also say in your letter, "challenging times". We, in the department of theology are ready to face them.

Let us hope that in future we may all, in the moving words of Doctor Shearing "set our personal buttons to Fast-Forward".

Yours in Our Ultimate Concern
S. EWANK (Rev) (Prof).

The Times Higher Education Supplement

February 11, 1983 No 536 Price 45p

How private enterprise is forging new links with universities

Big firms 'turned off' by tax law

by Jon Turney
Science Correspondent

Multinational companies are deterred from giving equipment to British universities and colleges by tax laws, according to a leading computer manufacturer.

Mr David Baldwin, managing director of Hewlett-Packard, said last week that more generous tax allowances in the United States meant that bulk of his company's \$25m budget for equipment donations went to American institutions.

American tax laws were changed in 1981 to allow half the profit margin on equipment against tax as well as the cost price. In Britain, only cost was allowed. "This represents a substantial disincentive to make donations in Britain," Mr Baldwin said.

The company argues that giving engineering departments the latest computing equipment helps improve the quality of teaching. Students trained on outmoded equipment are less valuable to high-technology industry after graduation.

Mr Baldwin wrote in the company's 1982 British annual report: "Hewlett-Packard is well satisfied at the high standard of graduates from British universities. But there must be doubts about the maintenance of both quality and quantity in future as the educational system struggles to keep pace with the rapid growth of high-technology industry."

Other obstacles to donation stemming from British tax law include tight definitions of the use to be made of the equipment. But Hewlett-Packard is unusual as the British company is closely tied to its American parent and the budget for donations is controlled from the United States.

Other British computer companies generally have more autonomy in this field, although most agree that more generous tax concessions would encourage them to give away more equipment to universities.

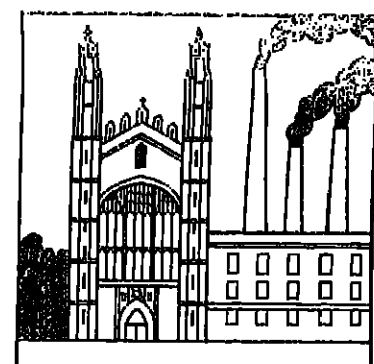
Mr Marcus Palliser, of Digital Equipment, said that the company made donations of equipment and education had been given priority in the last few years. But the British gifts were decided independently of the parent company.

Other companies, such as IBM, prefer to assist educational institutions by making cash grants or setting up cooperative research programmes.

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The Government was prepared to consider any package which a university or polytechnic might put forward regardless of how radical or controversial it might be.

"This Government is showing itself willing to alarm the educational lobby with a good deal with moves such as the Manpower Services Commission's directly funded schemes," Mr Waldegrave said.

Riches from overseas fees rethink

by John O'Leary

Universities and polytechnics will gain millions of pounds as a result of the Government's rethink on overseas students' fees announced this week by Mr Francis Pym, the Foreign Secretary.

The £40m scheme, a response to last year's study by the Overseas Students Trust, is expected to provide more than 5,000 additional scholarships and awards each year. Although not all elements of the scheme will be operational in time for the new academic year and not all of the beneficiaries will be additional students, the extra numbers paying full-cost fees are bound to provide a financial windfall for institutions.

Mr Pym's announcement represented something of a reversal of Government policy since he had said when setting up the fees review that no new money would be available. Instead, ministers have found £25m from the Contingency Reserve to add to £21m reallocated from money to finance the three-year plan.

As an annual award, the sum involved falls far short of the £35m proposed in the OST report, £20m of which was to be found from other Government department budgets. The scheme also reassesses the commitment to full-cost fees, while holding out the prospect of freedom for institutions to set their own fee levels as long as no subsidy is involved. No such move is likely for at least two years.

The Government's scheme has six separate initiatives, including one entirely new scholarship fund designed to attract students who "will not only

benefit themselves but whose study and experience here will be of advantage to this country". Additional awards will also be provided under the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan and the Overseas Development Administration's technical cooperation.

Discussions have already started with the Hongkong government on proposals it made for a shared funding scheme to make up the balance

between home and overseas fees for eligible Hongkong university and polytechnic students. Similar arrangements would be considered for other dependent territories.

Unspecified provision is also to be made for Cyprus because of its special claims for preferential treatment and for Malaysia, as traditionally the sender of the largest number of students to Britain.

continued on page 3

Literacy magazine threatened

by Karen Gold

The future of a national magazine written and read by

Deadlock in redundancy talks

by David Jobbins

Union negotiators have reached a deadlock with local authorities in negotiations over redundancy compensation and procedures.

Now the executive of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education is to consider how best to apply pressure to individual local authorities rather than persisting with negotiations within the national joint council on conditions of service.

When the NAC heralded by Naffine as the model for free collective bargaining arrangements on both salaries and conditions — met last week the employers were not prepared to meet union demands on the status of the one year's notice of redundancy recommendations.

Nor would they join with the unions in an appeal to ministers for better treatment for lecturers who may lose their jobs either in the

current round of teacher education course closures or in any structural adjustments flowing from the planning exercise undertaken by the National Advisory Body on public sector higher education.

The employers argued that they were legally prevented from improving on the compensation terms announced by Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education, late last year, and that there was no case for lecturers being treated more favourably than other groups of local government workers.

Union negotiators feel that, because the pool of staff aged 50 or more and eligible for premature retirement compensation is fast drying up, the Government scheme is unlikely to attract takers.

They also regard it as vastly inferior to the terms offered to university academics. Previous contracts in the teacher education service

have been eased by the availability of generous Crombie compensation terms, now effectively blocked by the Government.

"This is nothing more than a totally inadequate compensation for people who are going to be summarily sacked," a senior official said.

Naffine is also worried at some implications of the scheme's discretionary nature. One fear is that employers locally may be wary of making use of it because of the effect on other groups of employees.

But progress was made in some key areas — essentially a commitment to national discussions on an agreement on dismissals, suspensions and disciplinary codes.

Advances were also made on the guidance to be issued at national level on the application of the threshold for qualification for assistant lecturer status to part-time staff with heavy administrative loads.

Authorities refuse to rock the college boat

by Felicity Jones

The Council of Local Education Authorities' decision to wash its hands of nautical education course closures could mean an end to half the country's maritime education centres.

The decision will now be left to the National Advisory Body, which is planning the future of public sector higher education. It is likely to retain only four or five centres in Plymouth, Liverpool, South Shields and Southampton.

The CLEA accepted the Merchant Navy Training Board position that there were too many courses for too few students and agreed some courses would have to close. Two years ago the navy took in 500 cadets and next year this will fall to 90.

Education authorities which house the 11 centres for advanced nautical education were asked to suggest their own cuts. But only half responded with proposals to reduce student numbers. The rest could see no need for reductions in their area.

The lost opportunity for self-regulation means that the NAB will probably act swiftly to reduce the centres to the main geographic regions.

This outcome has been sharply criticized by the Association of Navigation Colleges which fears that

the delicate balance between advanced and non-advanced, engineering, off-shore and fishing maritime education will be undermined.

The secretary of the association, Captain David Robinson, said that the NAB's scuppern exercise could undo three centuries of maritime education in one swoop. The future, looked bleak as no "young blood" was coming in and 40 per cent of the 375 lecturers were 50 years old and above, he added.

"Central government seems to forget that this is a maritime nation and 400 cadets should be trained a year, not 90," he said.

"There is a real danger that nautical education will die from the roots upwards because it takes 12 years to train a ship's master and the expertise is fast dying out."

The five largest centres for advanced training for ship's mates and captains are the ones in Southampton, South Shields, Plymouth, Liverpool and Fleetwood not counting the three in Scotland. The smaller centres include Humber College of Higher Education, City of London Polytechnic, Lowestoft College, Further Education, Brunel Technical College, Bristol, Glamorgan Institute of Higher Education and Ulster Polytechnic.

Engineering Council wins big vote of confidence

Chartered engineers have shown their confidence in the new Engineering Council with a clear vote in favour of transferring the registration functions of the Council of Engineering Institutions to the younger body.

More than 82,000 of the 200,000 chartered engineers returned postal ballot forms in the poll, which closed on Monday, and 92.9 per cent of those voting were in favour of the transfer. This is well above the two-thirds majority required in the CEI's charter, and follows the recommendation of the CEI's board and most of the major engineering institutions that engineers should approve the new arrangements.

The Engineering Council, set up to enhance the status of the profession and improve engineering practice along the lines suggested in the Finniston report, will now take over the register of engineers and the granting of the title CEng before the autumn deadline set in its own royal charter. The final move will be ratified by the Privy Council later this year.

The ballot marks the end of prolonged negotiations between the two bodies, and of fears that independent members of the CEI might block a transfer of powers. When the result was given on Tuesday, the CEI also announced that it will take steps to phase over its other functions, and to wind itself up before the end of the year.

The engineering assembly will be elected by chartered and non-chartered engineers in regional constituencies. It will meet at least once a year to question the members and staff of the council on their annual report. Dr Miller said this would be a useful way for the council to keep in close touch with opinion in the profession.

Fewer go to university

The number of students gaining university places through the Universities Central Council on Admissions dropped by 3.2 per cent last year compared with 1981, while applications rose by 2.6 per cent. The figures conceal a drop in overseas applications of 16.6 per cent.

The latest statistics from the UCCA show that a total of 171,495 students applied in 1982, compared with 167,096 the previous year. They comprised 156,675 home candidates (149,530 in 1981) and 14,821 (17,766) overseas applicants. Women applicants accounted for 40.8 per cent of the total last year compared with 39.9 per cent in 1981.

The total number of successful candidates went down from 80,341 to 77,732, consisting of 72,634 home students (74,514 in 1981) and 5,118 overseas (5,327 the previous year). Women were only slightly more successful last year than in 1981. They accounted for 40.8 per cent of all successful candidates in 1982 compared with 40.4 per cent in 1981.

Last year 20,823 students were admitted to science courses, both through and outside the UCCA scheme, while 18,886 were admitted to social, administration and business studies; 11,870 to engineering and technology; and 16,819 to arts courses. Within these groups most students took law, mathematics and English — 3,426; 3,133 and 2,882 respectively.

Medicine, dentistry and health took 6,546 students in 1982; education 1,064; agriculture, forestry and veterinary science took 1,409; and architecture and other professional and vocational subjects such as town planning and hotel management had an intake of 1,400.

Of the 15,797 students considered for the clearing system, 6,973 were not referred to a university, while 5,123 were referred but not accepted. A total of 6,189 students found places through clearing last year.

UCCA Annual Report 1981/82, p.125 from UCCA, PO Box 28, Cheltenham, Glos.

Scotland to have all graduate teachers

by Olga Wojtas

Scottish Correspondent

Scotland is to have an all graduate teaching profession, Mr George Younger, Secretary of State for Scotland, has announced.

A four year primary degree course will replace the present three year diploma in 1984 and there are to be improvements in the one year post-graduate courses for primary and secondary teachers.

The education colleges, unions, and the General Teaching Council for Scotland has been pressing for an all graduate profession for many years, and the decision has undoubtedly been precipitated by moves last autumn south of the border which would bar some Scottish diplomats from teaching in England and Wales.

Mr Alex Fletcher under secretary of state for Scotland denied this move, however, saying a consultation paper had been issued in 1980 while the decision was being made to close colleges and get a bit lost because of the natural concern about closures.

The three closures had undoubtedly helped fund the extra year's training which Scottish Office officials estimate will add "a few hundred thousand pounds" to the £25m education budget, said Mr Fletcher.

But the Government proposals would also cut costs by substantially increasing the number of primary teachers taking the one year post-graduate course, with only 55 per cent taking the new four year course.

Mr Fred Forrester, organizing secretary of the Educational Institute of Scotland, said the union had re-

servations. He said: "We'd like to hear the rationale behind it. It allows for fine tuning in the supply of teachers, but this ought to be planned over some year, not by turning the tap on and off at the last minute."

The Scottish Secretary is to set up a working party of the college principals, the GTC, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, teaching unions and the Scottish Education Department to prepare guidelines for the new degree by June.

All the new courses would be externally validated.

Mr Gordon Kirk, principal of Moray House College of Education, said his college would seek validation from the Council for National Academic Awards. "Accountability is a very powerful instrument for staff development, but the universi-

ties have virtually no experience of the kind of degree we should be preparing," he said.

The secondary BED degree is to be axed. The SED admitting this is for financial rather than educational reasons since there would be only 75 graduates this session.

Mr Kirk said the BED had been very successful but its axing would be accepted as part of the trade off for the primary degree.

However, he added that a call from the Scottish Secretary to examine rationalizing the one year secondary postgraduate course was "potentially explosive". At present the colleges providing secondary courses are trying to maintain a full range of subjects, and with SED cuts in secondary intake, rationalization could imply further college closures.

Wedderburn accuses colleagues of takeover

by Sandra Hempel

Professor Dorothy Wedderburn, principal of Bedford College, has accused other colleges within the University of London of trying to take over some of the departments with the backing of many of her staff.

Bedford College is merging with Royal Holloway and moving from its present site in Regent's Park site at Egham in Surrey.

The subject working parties set up to protect academic excellence within the universities in the face of the mergers and moves now going on felt "sadly like an exercise in asset-stripping", Professor Wedderburn told Bedford's governors at their recent annual general meeting.

"King's would like our philosophy department and University College Italian and Dutch", she said. "The argument is that these must be located in the centre."

"Frequently I and the faculties find ourselves in conflict with our colleagues over a subject which would still sub judice."

Professor Wedderburn's view was

that Bedford had negotiated with Royal Holloway in good faith and, while it was realised that some marginal moves might be appropriate, the mix of departments made academic sense.

The argument about the remoteness of Egham and its effect on intercollegiate teaching was spurious and the new RHC/Bedford would need to fight to expand because it would still be the smallest unit within the university and therefore vulnerable to any further cuts.

An argument is also going on over the location of Bedford's geology department. This is to merge with those of King's and Chelsea colleges while these institutions want to go to Chelsea's King's Road site, Professor Wedderburn and her staff want it to go to Egham.

Neither University College nor King's College would comment on Professor Wedderburn's accusations. A spokesman for UC said it would not comment on a subject which would still sub judice.

New FE training proposed

by Patricia Santinelli

A coherent system of initial training for serving further education teachers leading where possible to a qualification was recommended this week by the Government's advisory body on teacher training.

The Advisory Committee for the Supply and Education of Teachers has told the Secretary of State for Education that the absence of a statutory requirement for further education teachers to hold a qualification has led to "tens of thousands" of teachers in further and higher education not undergoing any professional training.

According to figures published in its advice only 25 per cent of the 17,000 full time teachers in polytechnics in 1981 had completed a recognized course of professional training. In other major establishments only 51 per cent of the 61,175 full time teachers had been trained.

Moreover many staff now beginning their career of further education teaching still did so without pre-service training. By 1981 only half of all new teachers in polytechnics and other establishments had received such training.

ASCT wants the system to serve all teachers, whether employed full

time or part time and whether their work is vocational or non-vocational, further education or general adult education. It considers professional training should lead to the award of a Certificate in Education (FE) for those who are able to pursue their studies to this level.

The committee believes that the current schemes of initial in-service training known as Haycocks I and II should be rationalized and a common curriculum introduced which would also take in other training courses run by City and Guilds.

It recommends that the Department of Education and Science should explore with local education authorities, through the Regional Advisory Councils and interested voluntary bodies, prospects for developing existing and planned future provision for initial training for serving part time and full time teachers in order to provide a system of training to certificate level.

A full-time diploma course for teachers in the principles and practice of industry and commerce launched this week at St. Mary's College, Twickenham was described as breaking new ground by Mr John Macgregor, under secretary of state for industry.

Help for student entrepreneurs

Forty potential entrepreneurs among forty potential Scottish university students will be helped to set up their businesses in a venture launched from Strirling University.

The Scottish Enterprise Foundation was formed at Strirling last November, sponsored by both the public and private sector. One of its first initiatives is the Graduate Enterprise Scheme launched in a series of one day conferences at each of the eight Scottish universities.

All graduating students will be sent a letter asking them to submit

ideas for a business which will be reviewed by a local panel of university staff, professional firms and business people. Each university has appointed an enterprise officer.

In June a national panel chaired by Sir Monty Finniston will select 40 of the most viable ideas. The successful students will then undergo an 18-week training and development programme backed by an enterprise allowance, a market research grant, a general grant, office facilities and free tuition, valued at £5,000.

MPs learn about life behind bars

by Karen Gold

The first prisoner to give evidence to a Parliamentary inquiry in the House of Commons this century had few kind words for the prison education system.

"Mr Smith" as he was addressed by MPs, a long-term prisoner at Wormwood Scrubs, said he had sympathetic educational advice from only one assistant governor throughout a 14-month wait before he gained access to an Open University course.

When he entered prison he said "yes" when the education officer asked him if he was interested in education. Mr Smith told members of the House of Commons Select Committee on Education, Science and Arts that the education officer promised to visit him and discuss it further, but he never saw him again, he claimed.

"It was only after putting in application after application that I got something," he said. Now doing an OU arts foundation course, Mr Smith said he had more support from prison officers and governors than education staff.

But the other witness to the committee's inquiry into prison education, ex-prisoner Ms Dorothy Doyle, said that although education in prison had been a lifeline to her it was always at the mercy of overcrowding, staff shortages and the whim of the prison officers.

More often than not she had missed classes or they had been severely curtailed because of the lack of warden to escort her to them during her 14-month stay in Holloway, she said. Prisoners and education staff had to "hassle and manipulate" prison officers to keep classes running.

During her sentence Ms Doyle gained O levels in English, language and literature. She is now working towards a social work qualification. Her pursuit of learning in prison followed a period in a rehabilitation centre for drug offenders before she entered Holloway. Otherwise she would have been less successful, she said.

Mr Smith also said that unless prisoners were very highly motivated towards education they were deterred by the obstacles. Basic subjects were more important than ones like sociology or ecology, he said.

Neither of them had been successful at school, and both believed prisoners deserved a second chance for education and should have a legal right of access to it. They also said the system of paying prisoners in workshops more than twice the amount paid to those doing full-time education was a disincentive.

The Education in Prisons Bill which was introduced in the House of Commons by Mr Harry Giddens, MP, was receiving a second reading today. The Bill, which effectively establishes the right of access to education for all prisoners, has wide backbench support from all parties.



Robert Lardner, a student at West London Institute of Higher Education's Ballet Rambert School, demonstrates the figures of a dancer's training for the children's television programme, CB7TV. It is hoped that the programme will coincide with Ballet Rambert's gala performance on March 8 at Sadlers Wells in aid of the Marie Rambert Memorial Fund. The gala will be attended by the Princess of Wales and will help raise £100,000 for new studios at the Institute and for a scholarship scheme.

NUS peace strained by sacking

National Union of Students staff proposals for an industrial relations audit at the union's headquarters were being presented to the Advisory, Conciliation, and Arbitration (ACAS) today.

An audit was suggested by the NUS executive after a 10-day strike by 70 staff over allegations that new working practices were being introduced without proper negotiations. This union group felt the traditional ACAS approach to industrial relations might not be totally appropriate to a voluntary organization like NUS and sought to involve a wider circle of expertise, perhaps involving a two-stage investigation.

Meanwhile the ceasefire since the December settlement of the strike is coming under increasing strain. Chief executive Mr John Garnet this week warned the staff union that employees who refuse to cover for the union's sacked press officer, Mr Alan Hiscock, face disciplinary action.

Mr Hiscock, an experienced journalist, has been paid off one month before his second three-month probationary period of employment expires following a clash with Mr Garnet and the NUS leadership over his alleged failure to adjust to the union's requirements.

The manner of his dismissal has reopened the sores of the last dispute, and is said to have surprised a number of members of the NUS executive.

A significant number of key personnel have left NUS in recent months including National Student editor Mr Chris Nawrat and conference officer Ms Margaret Sullivan.

The teaching courses that got away

The long-term future of concurrent courses leading to a teaching qualification was being discussed today by the University Grants Committee's education committee.

This follows the late realization by the Department of Education and Science that it had overlooked some BA/BSc and BTEch courses when it set the sector's overall target of 500 BED places for the next three years.

The DES is embarrassed by the whole matter and is therefore not pressing for an immediate cutback. But it is asking the UGC to consider where reductions might be made in the long term.

Altogether about 200 students qualify each year through these courses at nine universities. These are Bath; Brunel; Cambridge; Hull; Chelsea College, London; Loughborough; Manchester; Wales University College, Cardiff; and York.

Some of these were accounted for in the DES's calculations, but it is understood that courses at between three to five universities were not included.

It is quite likely, however, that any real decision will depend entirely on the future deliberations of the Advisory Committee for the Supply and Education of Teachers when it considers what targets should be set from 1986.

UGC at a dangerous age . . .

The University Grants Committee may reconsider its decision to apply an upper age limit of 35 on applicants for the 300 "new blood" posts after a warning that it could be in breach of the Sex Discrimination Act.

The act outlaws indirect discrimination — the imposition of requirements which women find more difficult to comply with than men. And the Association of University Teachers, which is raising the issue with the UGC, says that a smaller proportion of female academics will be able to comply with the 35-year bar than men.

Mr John Akker, the AUT deputy general secretary said: "It discriminates against women who have stopped work in their late 20s and 30s to raise kids and will not be able to return to work until their children have reached school age."

The Equal Opportunities Commission is also concerned about this aspect of the scheme. It said: "We have always been against age bars." In 1978 the Employment Appeal Tribunal ruled that the requirement by the Civil Service of a maximum age of 28 for appointment to the executive officer grade was unlawful indirect discrimination because in practice fewer women than men could comply with it.

"We feel the cases are very similar in content," Mr Akker said.

The EEC confirmed it might also be unlawful to advertise posts to which an age bar was attached, but added that the case could not be tested until an individual took a case to an industrial tribunal.

Vice chancellors have until the end of next week to lodge claims for the new posts, which are unlikely to be advertised before Easter, although



An automated memory trainer to help neurology patients suffering memory loss, pictured here with the Southampton University Electronics Department team which designed it, was among prize-winning entries in a Design Council engineering award. All seven prizewinning projects in the 1983 Mollins Design Prize came from university or polytechnic departments, including Bath, Cambridge and Loughborough universities and Plymouth and Stroud colleges.

Thatcher college condemns loans

Students at Mrs Thatcher's old college have told her of their opposition to Government plans to introduce student loans as part of the student support system.

A statement prepared by the junior common room at Somerville College, Oxford, and presented to the Prime Minister on her visit last weekend, attacks proposals for a mixed loans and grants scheme.

"We believe this marks a step back towards the idea that education is a privilege, enjoyed mainly by those who can afford it, not a right to be enjoyed by all. Restricted access to higher education is not only a waste of society's precious resources but also demands the principle that education is valuable for its own sake."

The students believe the scheme would not have the Government's effect of reducing spending on student support and would restrict access by children of poorer families, women and mature students.

Ministers have yet to win Cabinet approval for their plans.

Overseas fees

continued from page 1

The final element of the scheme will provide "some limited additional provision" for the British Council to attract fee-paying students and to strengthen academic links.

Mr Pym added that it was hoped that the Overseas Research Students Award Scheme, which caters for outstanding postgraduate researchers, would be broadened and the full quota of awards taken up. The scheme is likely to be extended to the public sector and to include all postgraduates, along these lines to Cabinet colleagues in 1978 but found no support.

Student organizations and aid agencies were also critical of the new measures. Mr Rupert Bristow, executive secretary of the United Kingdom Council for Overseas Student Affairs, pointed out that the Government was

giving only a third of the amount proposed by the OST. He claimed that financial support for foreign students would drop next year unless the whole scheme was operational. "Even though half a loaf may be better than none, it is debatable whether a quarter of a loaf will provide the encouragement to overseas students the Government is seeking to give," he said.

Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education told the Commons Select Committee on Education, Science and the Arts that the contribution from the education budget to the £46m announced by Mr Pym to encourage overseas students would be "marginal". He hoped the Government could give advice on the residential status of overseas students following the Home decision in as short a time as possible.

Mr Pym told MPs that the Lords decision, the chairman of the committee said that local authorities were under "dire financial uncertainty"

Mr Neil Kinnock and Mr Philip Whitehead, the Opposition education spokesmen, said that the statement was a betrayal of the overseas students and the country's long-term interests. Labour would expand student sponsorship through the ODA on grounds of origin, income level and availability of courses in Britain and elsewhere.

However, Mrs Shirley Williams, president of the Social Democratic Party, accused Labour of hypocrisy over the issue. She told the THES that she had proposed a £100m scheme along these lines to Cabinet colleagues in 1978 but found no support.

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Cambridge's display of animal vigour cancels out 'cancer'



Mr Stewart: difficult task

by David Jobbins

Charges that Oxbridge represents a cancer within the education system were emphatically dismissed this week by the Cambridge Union.

This led Mr Neil Stewart, president of the National Union of Students, and leader of the attack on the privileged to half joke afterwards: "The result only goes to show how much the admissions system has to be improved."

One of the largest meetings in recent years rejected the proposition lifted from early drafts of Labour's post-18 education policy - by a decisive 288 votes to 153.

Mr Stewart, who admitted he was more at home with a three-minute rant at a student general meeting than with the urbane and extended style of union debates, recognized from the outset that his task of convincing the essentially conservative union to endorse the indictment was

near impossible.

But the choice of motion was not his and he faced formidable opposition in the shape of Sir Peter Swinerton-Dyer, master of St Catherine's and two years ago vice-chancellor of the university. Sir Peter suggested he had displayed the "animal vigour" of his ancestors surging down the slopes of Culoden to defend a lost and out-dated cause.

Mr Stewart pointed out that Labour had distanced itself from the "cancer smear" but he attributed its appearance in the document squarely to Mr Charles Clarke, a past president of the student union at Cambridge and now advisor to Mr Neil Kinnock, Labour's education spokesman.

He warned students that unless Oxbridge - described by one speaker as a system of elitism unparalleled since the days of the Prussian Junkers - reformed itself, it would be reformed

from the outside. Reforms were being made but was a 0.6 per cent increase in the representation of state schools significant?

The real debate was not about how the system could cater for white male 18-year-olds, or whether entrance should be determined by a level or the universities' own examination, but how access could be widened.

Sir Peter endorsed earlier speakers who had blamed any imbalance in Oxbridge entry on the deficiencies of the state school system.

"In the long run I believe the results of comprehensive will be good but in its present highly imperfect state it is not giving brighter children nearly as good teaching as they used to 30 years ago."

He placed a large portion of the blame for Oxbridge's inability to reform itself on Sir Harold Wilson, who turned down requests for a Royal Commission.



Sir Peter: blamed state schools

Windfall for small-scale physics

by Jon Turney
Science Correspondent

The Science and Engineering Research Council is prepared to double the value of grants for small-scale physics research, provided enough good projects can be found.

The council's physics committee, which supports the work of researchers not studying in the expensive "big science" areas of particle physics, nuclear structure and astronomy, has an extra £1m to spend this year. But it must all be allocated to projects put forward by April 1.

The council gave news of this windfall to members of the standing conference of professors of physics at the hands of physics.

The extra money follows a call for more support in a report by Professor Jo Vinen of Birmingham University, the chairman of the physics committee until last summer. He said this week the decision showed that basic physics was an important discipline which deserved stronger support.

Physicists at the meeting were told that no particular areas in their discipline were being singled out at the moment, and the distribution of the money would depend on the quality of applications received. But the SERC also wants to develop a policy for promoting specific projects, some with industrial applications, especially in information technology.

The physics committee, which makes recommendations to the SERC's science board, turned away last year, but the budget increase should be large enough to cater for an increase in the total of applications from university and polytechnic departments.

Youth extension

The Government has extended the consultation period for the Youth Service Review Group report until March 31.

Students want second opinion

Students at Queen Elizabeth College, London, have demanded independent arbitration over a decision to transfer physics students to another college.

The QEC council decided last week that the 40 students should work at King's College from their second year onwards, which begins this October. Technically, they will remain QEC students.

The students already travel to the King's site in the Strand for lectures. Practical work and tutorials continue to be held at QEC but this will change from October.

The arrangement was designed to cushion the effect of the loss of physics staff from both colleges and was

Primary message gets through

by Patricia Santinelli

Applications for 1983 bachelors of education courses, in particular primary teacher training, have risen sharply on last year, according to figures released this week by the Central Register and Clearing House.

For both primary and secondary teacher training courses applications are now up by 14.6 per cent, or 8,719 compared to 7,608 in 1982. The global target for BED degrees through the Clearing House was set at 6,700 - 5,100 primary and 1,600 secondary - when Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Education and Science announced the final reductions in the autumn.

Although applications for primary courses are not yet in line with this target, they have risen from 759 to 1,146. The Clearing House regards this as a sign that the message of the government's restructuring schools and students.

Decision on art school put back

Widespread public opposition to proposals to close Winchester School of Art has caused Hampshire education authority to defer its debate on the school's future until the end of March. A decision was to have been taken this week.

The new time scale has been drawn up to allow a working party to be drawn from the governors of the school, Portsmouth Polytechnic and Southampton College of Higher Education, the three Hampshire higher education institutions offering art and design courses. The party has been asked to report back to the county's further education sub-committee on March 29.

It is now expected that a number of other possibilities as well as closing Winchester will be considered. It is the view of Mr Jack Burgess, the senior assistant chief education officer for further and higher education, that in the long run the authority cannot sustain art and design in all three institutions.

However we are now actively looking for a settlement which is more acceptable to public opinion than Winchester's closure," he said.

The general rise should also go some way towards reassuring the Department of Education and Science and others who have been sceptical that the BED could truly recover from its low ebb of 1980 when some institutions met only 30 per cent of their quota.

The Clearing House says that there should be vacancies in most subjects but that as usual it is the most popular subjects such as physics, education and English which have the highest applications as well as the BED mentally handicapped courses, some of which are already full.

Applications for chemistry and physics have remained low with chemistry getting only 18 applications as opposed to 21 in 1982 and physics only 10 as opposed to 21. But general science and biology applications are up.

The boom in applications to Post-leaving Certificate courses has not totally materialized. Applications are

Pensioners urged to call free classes campaign

West Midlands pensioners are proposing a campaign for free local authority adult education classes for all pensioners, in a resolution to go before the annual meeting of their national association next week.

The resolution before the British Pensioners' and Trade Unions' Association condemns Government financial pressure as partly responsible for local authority class fee increases.

It also calls on the conference delegates to instruct the association's new executive to launch a campaign for "free attendance for senior citizens at adult education classes."

The resolution comes from the 4,000-member West Midlands Pensioners' Association, which was formed in 1981, and is seconded by the Birmingham branch of the National Union of Teachers. The West Midlands is becoming some-

thing of a pensioners' blackspot for adult education, with the latest move by Dudley to raise its pensioners' annual fee from 30p to £30 pointed out particularly by the WMFA.

The WMFA's secretary, Mr Tom Patterson, said if a campaign was launched, its first task would be to find out what provision and support there was for pensioners in all local authorities. Increasing pensioners' charges was closing classes indirectly, he said, because numbers would fall below minimum levels - in most authorities 12 students - when pensioners could not afford to continue.

A campaign would also seek support from sympathetic local authorities and other organizations, he said. "We know adult education to be an important part of the best use of retirement years, which any government should applaud, and should be responsible for seeing it takes place."

Get together, says minister

Schools and further education colleges should form consortia to teach the 16-18-year-olds, according to Mr Alex Fletcher, the Scottish education minister.

Mr Fletcher told the Scottish Grand Committee in Edinburgh this week that the Government's action plan for 16-18-year-olds had received all-party support from Scottish educationists.

"At present there were several hundred non-advanced further education courses. Most were individually tailored to the requirements of particular trades or employers, although many parts of different courses were virtually identical," he said.

The Government was proposing a series of individual subject certificates, which would record the completed courses.

One of the themes of the action plan is to break down the barriers

between school and further education," said Mr Fletcher.

Mr Fletcher said he hoped senior pupils could take the new courses in their own schools or colleges. They could mix with conventional higher courses, although he recognized there were difficulties because of the different teaching qualifications held by staff in schools and further education.

The action plan was largely welcomed by the Grand Committee, but there were objections to the language in which it was couched. Mr Nicholas Fairbairn MP commented that the authors "written the never have understood their reality."

Inverness Technical College is urgently seeking funding from the Scottish Education Department for a major extension to cope with serious overcrowding.

News in brief

Lords map out science inquiry

The House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology has chosen remote sensing and digital mapping for its next inquiry. Remote sensing - detailed observation of the earth's surface by satellite-borne instruments - is the focus of a major initiative by the Department of Industry and the Science and Engineering and Natural Environment Research Councils.

The committee is interested in mapping applications of the technique. Its choice may have been influenced by current controversy over the Government's own map-makers, the Ordnance Survey.

Lord Shackleton, who will chair the Lords sub-committee undertaking the new inquiry, was opening a debate in the House this week opposing the Department of the Environment's plan to set up a trading fund for the Survey.

Occupation ends

Students at Bristol Polytechnic have ended their week-long occupation of the administration block after receiving a High Court writ. They claimed that proposals to move most of the humanities department to the art and design faculty site would cause severe overcrowding.

Parking space

Plans to build a science park at Sussex University are being explored in conjunction with the planning departments of Brighton Borough Council and the East Sussex County Council. Two firms have offered buildings provided the university finds a site.

Jobless plea

The Open University Students' Association has called for a permanent fund to support unemployed students. Mrs Pam McNay, the student president, has written to Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education and Science, saying that all OU course fees are too high, despite this year's smaller increase.

Honourable move

Aberdeen University has conferred the title of honorary research professor on the directors of five local research institutions. They are Dr Philip James, of the Rowett Research Institute; Dr Thomas West, of the Macaulay Institute for Soil Research; Dr John Connell of the Torry Research Station; Dr Alasdair McIntyre, of the Marine Laboratory; and Dr Patrick Grant of the Institute of Marine Biochemistry.

Private matter

The Manpower Services Commission has appointed Mr Ron Stephenson as chief executive of its new skillcentre training agency, to oversee privatization of the Government's 69 skillcentres which run MSC training schemes. From April Mr Stephenson will have to sell skillcentre training to businesses as well as the MSC to fund their £60m a year running costs.

AUT fights a new threat to tenure

by David Jobbins

Union leaders are claiming that ministers' use of the Privy Council to force through weakened tenure protection for university academics raises serious constitutional issues.

The Association of University Teachers is seeking talks with the Privy Council on the way it is implementing a ministerial decision to add clauses permitting dismissal on grounds of redundancy when new or amended charters and statutes are sought.

The Privy Council has called on the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, to submit "suitably re-drafted" proposals for its amended charter, and London University's Institute of Education is considering how it should respond to a similar request.

Mr Neville Lee, secretary to the Privy Council, wrote to Aberystwyth: "Ministers have now concluded that all new and supplementary charters for university institutions which contain provisions on tenure must include in such provisions explicit mention of redundancy as a reason for dismissal."

Most tenured academics may only be dismissed on "good cause" grounds - usually only for blatant misconduct.

The AUT regards tenure as a basic of academic freedom. It has told the Privy Council that it is normal for the union to be consulted when it is considering charter changes which effect the terms and conditions of employment of staff, and that many are subject to collective bargaining agreements which in some cases are legally binding.

Mr Laurie Sapper, general secretary of the AUT, said, "Whether they are legally binding or not it is monstrous for the Privy Council to sweep them aside without any discussion."

"This raises a major constitutional issue since our understanding - and that of most governments - has been that charters and statutes are long-term documents, setting the shape of institutions, and never have been subject to day-to-day changes in government policy. Charters should not become the playthings of such policy changes."

Although Aberystwyth and the institute are in the vanguard, other institutions subject to the ministerial instruction will include the merged University of Ulster - Ulster Polytechnic and the proposed University College, Cardiff/University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology combination.

Although the AUT is to consider bringing pressure on Privy Councils, its main tactic will be to persuade institutions not to seek changes in charters.

ceives more favourable treatment than the Standing Conference of Principals and Directors of Colleges. One of the options is for a merger between the two bodies with a shared secretariat funded by the member colleges and polytechnics.

Another option could be to withdraw the money from CLEA and leave the CDP to survive on support from its individual members. Another option would be to merge the two bodies into a single body which would act as a pressure group for the directors of polytechnics.

The Council for Local Education Authorities has called for a second report on alternative funding of the CDP to be ready for the April meeting.

Many CLEA members believe that the CDP is an anomaly which receives more favourable treatment than the Standing Conference of Principals and Directors of Colleges.

Another suggestion was for the National Advisory Body on local authority higher education to take over responsibility, but this would be difficult as polytechnics deal with non-advanced as well as advanced further education.

The proposal to merge with the college sector arose a few years ago but did not lead anywhere. The CDP to try to grade the post of its secretary which Dr Michael Lewis from Oxford Polytechnic takes up next month.

Although CLEA holds the purse strings, the Inner London Education Authority administers the grant after the CDP has agreed to pay 10 per cent of total annual expenditure in polytechnics.

The criticisms of the CDP comes because it acts as an interest group for the polytechnic directors and the institutions themselves, while also providing an information and statistical service. These activities are considered to be at odds.

UMIST 'needs peace and quiet'

After a trying and difficult year which included "trial by newspaper", the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology needs a period of stability and calm to get on with its proper job, according to Professor Harold Hankins, its acting principal.

In the institute's latest annual report Professor Hankins describes attempts to come to terms with cuts imposed by the University Grants Committee. He also refers to the controversy over renovation costs at Highbank, the official UMIST residence, which ended in the early retirement of the principal, Professor Robert Haszeldine.

It was a relief to read the report of the committee of inquiry set up to investigate the "unhappy affair" at Highbank. Professor Hankins writes the process of appointing a principal has now begun.

While the financial picture remained fragile there were some encouraging signs. "There is unanimity on the campus that the proposal put to us, that we should merge with Salford University is a non-starter and we have overwhelmingly decided to further develop our sensible and historical links with the University of Manchester, but as a separately financed UMIST," he says.

Mr Tony Russell, chairman of Imperial Biotechnology and former chairman of Lankoro Chemicals and Diamond Shamrock Europe, is the new chairman of UMIST's council.

'Give 16-18s £25 a week'

A national mandatory scheme offering an index-linked £25 a week allowance to all 16-18-year-olds staying on in full-time education is necessary, according to the Child Poverty Action Group.

The group says in a report published this week that the non-means tested scheme would cost about £500m. It would be the only way of ensuring that young people from low-income families had equal access to education.

"The sum is little more than half the funds allocated to the Youth Training Scheme and is a tiny proportion of the projected education and social security budgets of £13,000m and £33,000m respectively," the action group says.

In the report *No Choice at 16* the group argues that the present system of discretionary allowances is not sufficient.

"The scheme is arbitrary and inadequate. It does not offer a real choice at 16. Young people of identical circumstances will generally be entitled to different allowances in

different parts of the country, indeed in some local education authorities they will receive no award at all," the group says.

Its survey shows that at least five I.e.s.a.s do not even offer education maintenance allowances. Cheshire, Richmond, Doncaster and Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire.

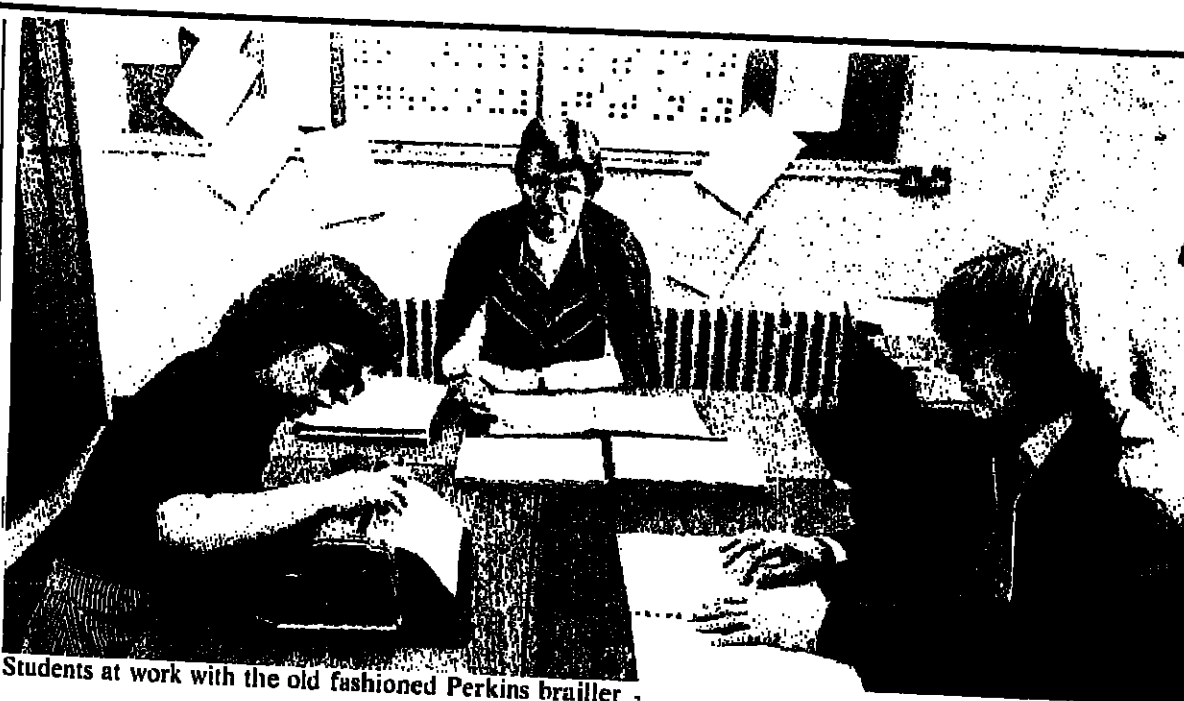
Less than half the I.e.s.a.s cut their educational maintenance allowance budget in real terms between 1979/80 and 1981/82. The highest cuts were in Northamptonshire, Sutton, Powys, Hertfordshire, Manchester and Humberside, where the cut has ranged from 100 to 400 per cent.

The average allowance paid in 1981/82 was £5.25 and the average maximum was £7.60. In most cases this was paid only to people with an income below supplementary benefit level.

No Choice at 16 - a study of educational maintenance allowances, by Louise Burghes and Ray Staples, Poverty Pamphlet 57, £1.25 from CPAG, 1 Macklin Street, London WC2.

Anger at plan to sell college

There is anger over the Scottish Office decision to continue trying to sell the former Callendar Park College of Education.



Students at work with the old fashioned Perkins braille

Braille machine out of touch

A lightweight and reliable machine allowing blind students to write and read in Braille is to be developed at sighted students.

The Royal National College for the Blind in Hereford has been awarded £125,000 to design a micro chip version of the Perkins Braille, standard issue for all blind students and school children in the country since the 1960s.

The Perkins, designed in America in the 1940s, and introduced in Britain during the 1950s is too heavy for young children to cart about, that it is too noisy to use to take notes in lectures, and that it often breaks down.

It is also expensive, costing £150. Mr Peter Talbot, vice principal of the college, said it was time to produce an updated version of the Perkins, taking new technology into account.

"It is no exaggeration to say the Perkins revolutionized the education of the handicapped but we need a lighter model that does not breakdown so often," said Mr Talbot. The college has a technician who deals with breakdowns.

The grant has come from the Mountbatten Trust. The college is to advertise for a researcher who will be able to use some of the 212 blind and partially sighted students at the college as guinea-pigs.

SSRC staff prepare case against cuts

by Paul Flather

The joint trade unions at the Social Science Research Council

Representatives from the four unions were meeting a group of sponsored MPs, convened by Mr Jeff Rooker, to discuss the pamphlet and other ways of winning support for their campaign to back the SSRC.

Staff are currently working to rule and refusing to cooperate with any instruction which might eventually lead to cuts in staffing or council services.

They are in dispute following proposals to cut about 30 posts from the current complement of 148 over three years, and went on strike for nine days. Both sides are preparing for negotiations expected to start before the end of the month.

Mr John Macreadie, national officer of the Civil and Public Servants Association, one of the unions involved, said no one was under any illusion about trying to change the Government's mind on cuts.

● The SSRC is considering writing to select scholars and institutions at home and abroad asking for views on an alternative if it decides to change its name.

The council failed to reach a decision at its last meeting, with a growing lobby arguing against any change and that at any rate no suitable alternative had yet been proposed.

● A further £450,000 has been allocated to the study of social and economic problems, including the rates of fertility, in Northern Ireland by the SSRC.

The money marks the second stage of SSRC-supported research in Ulster, building on a total of £481,344 already allocated by the NI panel, chaired by Professor Michael Wise, professor of geography at the London School of Economics.

Priority areas are economic development, unemployment, education, training, agricultural policy, social and welfare changes, and population and demographic changes.

Most of the work will be done in Ulster, much in collaboration with official bodies such as the NI Department of Finance, or the NI Housing Executive.

Credit switch agreement signed

The Open University has signed its first credit transfer agreement with an overseas university - Trinity College, Dublin - and is continuing to establish a "one-for-one" deal

whereby Trinity College students who complete one or two years of an undergraduate degree will be eligible for exemption from two or four OU course credits respectively, towards the six necessary for an OU degree.

Open University students will similarly be eligible, although not automatically, to enter the second or third years of subjects they have already studied.

The OU already has such arrangements with around 15 British universities, and with the Council for National Academic Awards. Informal discussions have already begun with the Irish equivalent of the CNA - the National Council for Educational Awards - and with the two higher education colleges which comprise the National Institute of Higher Education, to bring them into the credit transfer arrangements.

Closer links between the OU and the republic were mentioned in the agreement for a closer relationship signed by Mrs Thatcher and then prime minister Mr Charles Haughey. Talks on extending the links beyond credit transfer are also likely to take place over the next few months.

Trinity College's involvement was welcomed by the OU because of the college's proposals for an evening degree programme in Dublin likely to attract OU-type students, according to the OU's negotiator Dr Richard Holmes.

The OU has several hundred students participating in direct credit transfer arrangements such as these, compared with the much larger number - 8,000-9,000 - receiving the less generous terms of one year's fulltime study exempting the student from one credit instead of two, under "advanced status" arrangements.

● Sir Kenneth Berrill KCB will become pro-chancellor of the OU and chairman of its council on May 1 this year. He succeeds Sir Peter Thornton, who was chairman of the University Grants Committee from 1969-73, head of the Government's Central Policy Review Staff from 1974-80, and is currently chairman of Vickers Dr Costa Ltd.

North American news

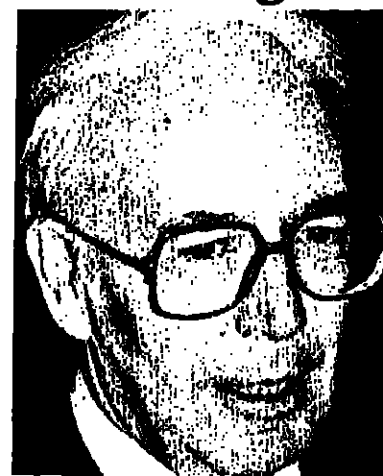
from Peter David

WASHINGTON President Reagan last week sent Congress a proposed budget for 1984 which has surprised and pleased the higher education community in the United States. Science is to receive a substantial bill and federal grants and loans to students - a prime target in last year's budget round - are to be kept approximately at existing levels.

The American Council on Education, which spent last year in a furious Congressional battle against the student aid cuts proposed in the 1983 budget, said it welcomed the decision this year to retain level funding. But it had not yet had time to react to a number of significant changes which the president wants in the way grants and loans are administered.

According to Mr Terrell Bell, the secretary of education, the changes are designed to restore the traditional role of students and parents in contributing as much as they can to the costs of higher education. Only after these "self-help" channels - which included federal loans - are exhausted will a student become eligible for outright grants.

To make it easier for students to raise more money themselves the government is proposing to spend \$850m on college work study programmes,



Bell: "restoring traditional method"



Bell: condemned serious flaws



Reagan: produced "pleasant surprise"

where the government pays 80 per cent of the wages earned by students taking part-time campus jobs.

The ACE, however, fears that campuses may find it impossible to cope with so rapid an expansion of the work study programme. It warned that many universities and colleges may be forced to create unnecessary "teach-raking" jobs simply to take

advantage of the federal money. University sources also expressed concern about the administration's assumption that a majority of students would be able to earn and borrow up to 40 per cent of the costs of their education. Senator Claiborne Pell, chief sponsor of the existing programme of "Pell" grants, said there were serious flaws in the proposal to introduce "self-help" grants.

He added: "Under the proposed self-help grants, students would be required to provide at least 40 per cent of their educational costs. Unfortunately, this 40 per cent would not include the contribution a family would be expected to make to a student's education. It would be in addition to that."

Social science, which was singled out for specially harsh cuts in President Reagan's first budget, is to receive a small increase of 17 per cent from the National Science Foundation. The increase is to be concentrated on the development of surveys and other data bases.

Explaining details of the new programme, the education secretary conceded that in some cases students would be unable to contribute 40 per cent of their college costs. He said that in such instances college financial aid officials would have the discretion to waive the new rule.

The 1984 budget proposes an increase of 17 per cent in federal spending on research and development. Universities are particularly pleased that much of the increase will be assigned to efforts to improve laboratories and instruments and encourage more talented young scientists to seek academic careers.

But the increases in the science budget are unusually selective, with the department of defence consuming a growing proportion of the nation's research and development budget. The White House has also decided to emphasize the physical engineering sciences - which contribute most directly to economic growth - at the expense of life sciences.

President Reagan wants to spend \$47,000m on federal research and development in 1984, an increase of \$6,900m or 17 per cent over this year's level.

Defence gets lion's share of increase

by Our North American Editor

The proportion dedicated for basic research - of which about a half will go to universities - is \$6,600m, 10 per cent more than this year and an increase of more than 4 per cent in real terms.

The new budget also proposes substantial economies in the gigantic GSA programme, under which the government underwrites low cost (9 per cent) loans to students. Last year the administration was defeated on a vote to cut the scheme.

This year, the president is proposing that from next year all applicants for the GSA, not just those with family incomes above \$30,000, would have to prove they needed the loan. The fee charged by the government for underwriting the loan would be doubled from 5 to 10 per cent.

In a totally new proposal, the administration is asking Congress to establish Education Savings Accounts into which parents could put up to \$1,000 a year, with interest and dividends free of tax, to pay for their children's higher education.

The cost of the accounts in lost tax revenue would be negligible in 1984 and grow to about \$200m in 1986.

basic research in the mathematical and physical sciences and engineering. The foundation will also spend an extra \$180m for upgrading university research instrumentation.

Mr George Keyworth, the president's science adviser, said the budget was intended to provide for growth in selected areas of national importance which were in dire need. As a result, there would be a marked difference in basic research increases for the physical sciences and engineering (15 per cent) and the life sciences (3 per cent).

"In a climate of intense fiscal scrutiny, it is no longer possible to spread increases uniformly throughout science. It is essential to concentrate them in areas that promise the greatest return to our foremost national priorities - industrial advances to fuel our economy and defence," he said.

University laboratories are expected to gain dramatically from the budget increases. In addition to specific programmes that earmark funds for equipment, substantial equipment funds are being included in research grants and contracts.

In all, the five principal funding departments (defence, energy, health and human services, NASA and NSF) will provide about \$400m as part of a long-term programme to upgrade academic facilities.

A number of projects planned by the department of energy will boost specific research campuses. A national advanced materials research centre is to be established at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory to improve links between academic scientists and those employed in federal laboratories or industry.

Other major projects include expanding the national synchrotron light source at Brookhaven; building a linear colliding beam accelerator at Stanford; and upgrading the Van De Graaff accelerators at Washington and Yale universities.

Maths teachers urged to improve

Mounting national concern about the poor quality of mathematics and science teaching in American schools is reflected in two new initiatives unveiled last week in the president's 1984 budget.

One programme, managed by the National Science Foundation, will encourage current maths and science teachers to take additional qualifications in maths, natural sciences and computer sciences. About 10,000 teachers will be able to participate in the programme every year.

The other, managed by the department of education, would provide block grants to school districts for in-training additional teachers in maths and science. The trainees

could include teachers in other specialties, retired teachers and qualified individuals from business and industry.

In 1984, the first year of the new block grant, some \$50m will be provided to school districts with the aim of training up to 30,000 new teachers over a four-year period. Both the NSF and the department of education programmes require matching funds to be provided by private sources.

Another programme, due to start in the current year, will entail giving 100 outstanding maths and science teachers a year a "Presidential certificate of excellence" and cash awards to improve quality.

Overseas news

Science power switch urged in Poland

from a Special Correspondent Polish universities and the academy of sciences should hand over their responsibility for applied science to a new competent state body at ministerial level, according to Dr Zdzislaw Kaczmarek, chief academic secretary of the Polish academy of sciences.

He was addressing the recent general assembly of the academy on the "adverse trends" in Polish learning, including the 20 per cent fall in employment over the last four years, and the deteriorating standards of available equipment.

Such a transfer would bring Poland into line with the other Comecon countries, in which such a "state minister, Sylwester Kaliski. All research in Poland had to be connected with some "problem", and an unseemly scramble for funding began to get his or her research the highest possible priority. The outcome was a "coordinating" role in the planning and administration of the national research effort.

Dr Kaczmarek said the proposed change had the backing of the academy's "authorities". It was not clear whether he was referring to the academic or party leadership of the academy - though during the "16 months" of liberalisation (from

September 1980 to December 1981), both sides expressed considerable discontent with the structure.

Indeed, until 1972, Poland, like all other Comecon countries, had its "committee of science and technology". But when it was realized that 75 per cent of research potential was employed within the university structure, a new ministry of science, higher education and technology was created.

The following year, a hierarchical system of problems was instituted, ranging from the seven "governmental problems" down through five ranks to the "branch" problems under the patronage of the then minister, Sylwester Kaliski. All research in Poland had to be connected with some "problem", and an unseemly scramble for funding began to get his or her research the highest possible priority. The outcome was a "coordinating" role in the planning and administration of the national research effort.

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September 1980 to December 1981), both sides expressed considerable discontent with the structure.

Since the death of Kaliski following a car crash in September 1978 (it is rumored that he then party leader, Edward Gierek, was personally requested by the doctors to throw the switch on the life support system), the artificial "problem" structure has fallen into increasing disrepute. In 1981, the consensus of academic opinion was that it should be replaced by, at most, a two-tier structure.

At the same time there were fervent demands for the independence of the academy, coupled with its wish that its funding (about 10 per cent of the total science budget) should be at its own disposal.

During the martial law period 800,000 "premature retirements" were encouraged, a large number of which fell within the academic and university sector, so that now there is a net shortage of jobs in higher education. This has been exacerbated by the "verification" process, which has demanded that everyone teaching in universities must sign an oath of loyalty to the state. The process has been extended, it appears, to the academy institutes, which until 1980 were a traditional refuge of the scholar whose political views were considered too unorthodox to allow him or her to have contact with the impressive minds of students.

Too few books give Castro a headache

from Patricia Smith

HAVANA The sale of medical text books to first-year university students has landed Cuban president Fidel Castro with a constitutional headache.

All educational materials are supposed to be free, according to Article 50 of the 1976 constitution. But there are so few books available that medical graduates are being forced to leave their reference books behind when they leave university and trust their study of the human anatomy, macrobiology and whatever, to memory. Not ideal for a country which is intent on becoming a medical world power.

So this academic year a pilot project was introduced to sell reference books, and even uniforms, to first-year medical students at cost price and on credit. If the experiment was successful the government planned to extend it to all medical students and later possibly all students.

The books crisis was not new but increased demand from a university population which had quadrupled to 200,000 in the last 14 years and a lack of resources have made it a cause of discontent.

The ministry of culture was asked to put its printing presses into operation to guarantee books for every one of the first-year students. It succeeded. Only the constitutionalists were watching and were quick to point out that selling books and uniforms violated the constitution.

"No one wants to violate the constitution," said Fidel Castro in a speech to a recent conference. "But what are we going to make of these books that we have sold to the first year, something they wanted? We are not going to give the students their money back."

Castro had a better idea. "We'll have to invent something, like: But even he didn't expect this would really wash with the critics. The constitution would have to be changed, "and we don't want to touch the socialist legality that it has established". Jurists and tribunals would have to meet to interpret the law or even the national assembly itself.

"We will have to look for specialists, and I think in this field we are not very strong. In law, in judicial science, I don't think we are very strong. It's a real headache. A book is a very personal thing. If you leave it behind, you are leaving behind everything."



Malcolm Fraser

Bob Hawke

Teachers back Labour

from Geoff Maslen

MELBOURNE Although academic associations in colleges and universities are likely to take a more neutral line, they are certain to publicize the effect of the Fraser government's curtailment of growth in higher education and the disastrous state of research funding in the country.

The election outcome is uncertain although Labour needs only a 1.4 per cent swing overall to win 12 seats and take over. Mr Fraser's seven years of office have been marked by increasingly bitter divisions within the Australian community, especially the concern by government school supporters of the growth of the private school sector. The federal Labour party, however, if it wins office, is not likely to offer schools or institutions the sort of money that flowed from Canberra during the Whitlam Labour government. But it is committed to tackling many of the problems facing educationists.

Academic protests at the decline in higher education funding have become more strident and teacher unions have become increasingly concerned about the drift in funding and students to private schools. At a recent annual conference of the Australian Teachers' Federation, teachers voted to spend Australian \$150,000 in the federal campaign supporting Labour policies on education. Several state teacher unions are also certain to campaign against federal government education policies.

Changes in Albania's higher education law passed last month will increase the length of university studies, particularly in the applied sciences. For example, courses in engineering, geology, mining and industrial chemistry at Tirana University will be extended from four to five years, while at the higher agricultural institute, courses in agronomy, forestry and veterinary sciences will be extended from four to 4½ years.

Precisely what form the lengthened courses will take is not clear. However, at a meeting last November of the Albanian People's Assembly (parliament) it was stressed that the government considered the implementation of the economic plans to be "indivisible from the development of education and culture, science and medicine, particularly in raising the quality of the work done in our

Longer courses will give filip to economy

schools." A large part of the additional course time will almost certainly, therefore, be devoted to practical work in industry or agriculture. The new syllabus schedules will bring an unexpected bonus to the economic target - more students in higher educational courses. The current five-year plan calls for a considerable expansion in higher education (50 per cent according to some commentators). Last month the People's Assembly was informed by the head of the state planning commission, Haxhi Z. Pajpajorgji, that this year the size of the student body would be 1.4 per cent above target.

The Stalinesque tradition of planning, still retained in Albania, normally expresses targets and achievements in percentages, which for the most part relate to an inaccessible base date, so that it is difficult to

Spanish dons let off new law

by Sarah Jane Evans

University teachers have been exempted from new jobs legislation which is ruffling the sensibilities of Spanish MPs and civil servants. The fuss relates to the Law of Incompatibility, which came into effect on January 1 and was passed by the former Centrist government, and to the new Socialist government's proposed legislation to toughen and extend it. The new government was elected on a ticket which declared its intent to reform the state bureaucracies. In its first 40 days, it has made some strong declarations on the reform of the working day and week.

The "incompatibility" legislation is based, says Minister of the Presidency Javier Moscoso, on the principle "that public service demands authentic exclusive dedication, and prohibits the exercise of private activity by the public servant or through an intermediary".

Newly-elected MPs must choose between their previous employment or Parliament. Not all MPs are happy with this. The spokesmen for the Parliamentary Socialist Party says that the typical objection comes from a doctor who is also head of department. If he resigns or is defeated in a general election, he may be able to return to medical practice, but he will have lost the departmental headship and the accompanying salary.

The proposed legislation throws up some interesting questions. What about the (state) TV weathermen who also work at the National Institute of Meteorology? Or the Socialist MP who is President of the Bonaire

Delhi strike suspended

from A. S. Abraham

BOMBAY The Delhi University Teachers' Association has suspended its 109-day-long strike following its acceptance of the vice-chancellor's interim formula, which the University Grants Commission had previously ratified.

The teachers' strike, which had affected the state television and radio network is going to be a particularly hard case: it is estimated that 20 per cent of the staff hold down more than one job.

Universities are by general agreement so far exempt. It has already been agreed that university lecturers who are also MPs will be allowed to continue lecturing with honorary status, so long as the dean agrees, and they are not paid. Javier Moscoso says that he can see occasions when university officers could give up their university classes. But, he says, "This must not be allowed to become a sort of passport to getting on the staff or the university promotion ladder."

In terms of salary, many Spanish lecturers will find little change in their circumstances as MPs. The law will hit hardest at lawyers and businessmen.

More jobs for doctors

from D. B. Udalgama

COLOMBO Reduced "employment" opportunities in the United Kingdom and the Middle East, which in the past have been the main destinations of emigrating doctors from Sri Lanka, are likely to result in the estimated 900 vacancies in the country's medical cadre being filled, Professor A. W. Abel-Smith of the London School of Economics and World Health Organization consultant, has told the government. He was commissioned by the government to report on the financing of the island's medical services.

Professor Abel-Smith has also said that the output of British medical schools will from this year have reached its planned maximum, nearly double the output of the 60s. "This has been planned with the aim of steadily replacing immigrant doctors, as they retire, with British doctors."

With the major expansion of medical education in the Middle East, opportunities for immigrant doctors are also likely to be reduced.

A stimulant for India's intellectuals

While most campuses are riven by strife a handful of institutes in New Delhi are improving the level of debate. A. S. Abraham reports

India's universities have probably never been in such a shambles. Throughout the country, campuses are marked by strife, strikes and scandals. Three of the most lavishly endowed and prestigious ones—Jawahar Nehru University in Delhi, All India Muslim University in Uttar Pradesh, and Baras Hindu University, also in Uttar Pradesh—have been all but paralysed by strife among student unions and between them and the university administrations, by examination scandals and by charges of gross nepotism and corruption.

These three are among a handful of higher education institutions directly run by the federal government. For that reason, they get more money, their staff are paid better and their student intake, from all over the country, is claimed to be of above-average quality.

For all that, they have reached a dead end.

Most Indian universities come under the jurisdiction of provincial or state governments, and here the picture is not brighter. Delhi University is recovering from a 14-week term schedules out of gear. Bombay University, still nursing the wounds from an examination boycott by teachers last year, as a result of which the current academic year began almost a whole term late, has had to appoint a special officer to ensure that examinations are held and results declared on time. One way this is sought to be done is by cutting the syllabus.

In the south, marks scandals in universities in Kerala are being prodded, as the credibility of their certificates is being questioned. In Gujarat, over the reservation of seats for the former in medical colleges, one consequence of the resulting examinations is that the trouble caused was the automatic promotion of students to the next year. Again, certification lost all credibility. In Bihar, notoriously corrupt and caste-ridden, examinations have been reduced to a farce as each vice



Mrs Gandhi's alienation from academics is near total

chancellor ensures that his caste kin monopolize the first-class lists. In Assam in the north-east, students have been spearheading a three-year-old campaign against "foreigners" (mostly Bangladeshi immigrants) in the state, a movement that has totally disrupted campus life. And in West Bengal, where a Marxist government has been in office since June 1977, the *bhadralok* (middle-class) of Calcutta have taken to the streets in protest against alleged Marxist indoctrination of school-children by rewriting textbooks and against the dissolution of secondary and higher education bodies prior to their reconstitution with pro-government majorities.

Only one kind of institution can be said to have kept its head academically above water. These are the Indian Institutes of Technology. Reckoning these from the IITs, *the de la mode* of school-leavers' entrance tests (the exception rather than the rule in India) make possible for poor but bright students to get in, and courses are flexible and up-to-date, emphasizing scientific, technical and humanistic learning.

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marking, lower fees, bus and train fare concessions, and so on. "One outcome of this concern with 'bottom-line' issues is the unionization of academics."

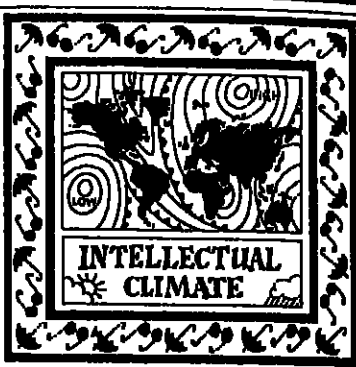
As holdouts of opposition to Mrs Gandhi's increasingly repressive rule, universities were among the main targets of victimization during the Emergency. When it was lifted, the heightened radicalization of academics was conspicuous in their total (and continuing) rejection of all Mrs Gandhi stood for, in their support for the Janata Party in the 1977 poll, which saw Mrs Gandhi unseated from office, and in their militancy when pressing their professional demands.

Like academics everywhere, those in India are broadly left-of-centre, though this often mingles uneasily with a vague Gandhianism that sees in a utopian rural reconstruction a panacea for India's ills. Of late, however, the influence in northern universities, not least Delhi, of right-wing Hindu conservatism, represented by the Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party), has become visible.

But, by and large, IIT campuses hum with the best kind of student endeavour: experimental projects, extra-curricular activity, debate and contention, games, and a high standard of routine course work. Every year, IITs organize week-long festivals of intellectual and cultural accomplishment. These have become prestigious events in which some of India's most eminent figures take part.

The high IQ level of the student body guarantees that their time is not wasted, making the festivals a showcase of campus excellence and organization. Yet, the country does not benefit from this investment in education.

For the most part, both teachers and students in Indian universities are bogged down in bread-and-butter issues. Teachers demand higher salaries, lighter workloads (to give them more time for productive leisure) and better working conditions. Students want thinner syllabi, lenient



been primarily engaged in improving their social and economic position, they have not been able to provide the kind of intellectual and scholastic leadership they do in Western societies. Apart from the universities, however, there are a handful of specialized research institutes in the humanities and the social sciences, many of them concentrated in New Delhi, which have been an intellectual stimulant to Indian society at large.

Figures like Rajni Kothari, Ashis Nandy and K. N. Raj have been engaged in the most rigorous and adventurous kind of conceptual thinking; they have helped to draw up the agenda of intellectual debate nationwide. Sociologists like Dr Andre Beteille (an Indian party of French origin), who is a university academic, have also made major contributions.

But it is journalism rather than academia which sets the tone of intellectual life in India. The phenomenal expansion of English-language journalism and of journalism in the major Indian languages in recent years, coupled with the use of advanced printing technology in especially magazine journalism, have given journalism an unprecedentedly vital role in defining India's intellectual concerns. Naturally, it draws heavily on academics, even as academics shabbily got-up, withered away.

This is a sign of the times. For with spreading literacy and education, India is fast acquiring the elements of a mass popular culture. The mass media, and especially print journalism which, unlike television and radio, is not government-run, is vital in this set-up and academics are only too eager and willing to reach out to larger numbers of interested people than they can either in classrooms or in dusty research publications.

try, was partly intended to scare academics. (In the event, it turned out to be less drastic than anticipated). The idea of importing lecturers from abroad can also be construed as a threat to Turkish staff.

Such claims are plausible, but extreme. Most lecturers have reacted to the present situation either by trying to ignore it and work as before (or rather, even harder than before, in view of increased teaching obligations which could pose a major obstacle to research) or by adopting an indifferent attitude, spending as little time on campus as possible.

The depression extending across most if not all of the university system is, of course, only part of a wider cultural depression consequent upon military rule. But inevitably it will also have social and political consequences of its own.

The Turkish press relies quite heavily on liberally-educated columnists and contributors from academics with new and controversial ideas. Other university staff and students have sought to influence the life of their country through parliament or government posts. Meanwhile, the past two decades saw a genuine if patchy improvement in the quality of higher education as such.

Given the present pressures on academic freedom, can the universities continue to set trends? Given the imminent public criticism of the HEC—not all of it from the left—can the universities retain their respectability? In view of the state of the social sciences in particular, can educational improvement be expected only in technical subjects? Much clearly depends on how soon the depression moves away. But with General Evren elected president for the next seven years (unopposed) and the HEC written into the constitution, the prospects are not good.

Turks have always had a high regard for learning, and the universities will no doubt become a matter of political debate as the new Turkish democracy grows in confidence. The universities recovered from a purge following the 1971 coup-by-communists. This time, things will just take a bit longer.

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Regional planning runs into delay

The directness and speed with which contentious issues have been raised, faced and, on the whole, dispatched is a justifiable source of pride within the National Advisory Body. Even some sensitive questions which did not demand to be raised in the NAB's first year—notably the matter of an increased proportion of two-year courses—have been met square on.

Yet there is one fundamental issue which remains far from settled one third of the way through the national body's initial term of office. It is the question of a regional structure, which was given its own high-priority working group when the NAB was set up a year ago. The group is chaired by Mr Christopher Ball, chairman of the board, and numbers sufficient of the leading institutional representatives among its members to have been proposed (unsuccessfully) as a kind of executive committee for the NAB during the first few months.

Not surprisingly, the group soon came to the conclusion, in answer to the first question it faced, that some form of regional organization was necessary if the body was to reflect the determination of Mr Ball and of the NAB committee to maintain a genuinely local higher education system. Indeed, the NAB secretariat was given specific regional responsibilities, each assigned a secretary liaising with two regional advisory councils outside London.

By last November, guided by discussions on regional needs at the board's residential weekend in Oxford, the group had also identified the role which the outlying parts of the structure might play, at least in the medium term. For the purpose of the immediate planning exercise to draw up a national plan to meet the Government's target of 10 per cent cuts, it was accepted that the existing advice because of time constraints. And in the longer term, the group acknowledged that the experience of

own proposals redounded. It was agreed that the regional bodies would have to operate within the general policy guidelines determined by the NAB and carry out tasks requested by the central body.

No close organizational link was envisaged between the NAB and the regional bodies, the latter retaining a similar degree of autonomy to that enjoyed by the RACs. Internal organization, membership and financing of the regions would be left for local determination with three suggestions only to be put to the local authority associations and the RACs. These were (and are) that the membership of individual bodies should be "acceptable politically and academically" to employers and trade unions and include representatives of the universities and the voluntary sector; that there should be links between the NAB and the region at member and officer level; and that their internal organization should not result in increased operating costs.

Consultation has begun on all of these points but still there is no favoured model for the regional structure itself. Three alternatives have been put forward by the group and accepted by the NAB board and committee, all of them well rehearsed in recent years but none with the official stamp of approval.

The first is to retain the RACs or something very like them—"territorial regions based on the counties." This was the solution favoured by the Oakes committee when the last Labour government proposed its own national body for public sector higher education. The Oakes report proposed nine new regional bodies based on the RAC but possibly with different boundaries. Stripped of their responsibilities for course approvals, the new councils were to employ their own staff and be funded by their constituent local authorities. Large "umbrella bodies" were to include university representatives, the inspectors and members of the national body itself, while (small) executive committees would deal with day-to-day work.

The second option has long been the aim of the polytechnic directors, whence the proposal sprang in the NAB's deliberations. "Cluster" regions would be based on groups of institutions rather than of local authorities and each would be centred on one or more major institutions. Virtually all cases these would be polytechnics, which would take priority in the distribution of advanced work. The plan has never been put forward publicly in such detail as the models for the two alternatives posed by the NAB, but the directors have suggested the designation of "major institutions" to be complemented by satellite colleges in previous policy debates.

Finally, there is the most radical choice which was worked out by Professor Keith Clayton, the University Grants Committee representative on the NAB board and a member of the group examining regional policy. This proposal is for 24 "commuting areas" based on the feasibility of travel to colleges and universities within the region. The scheme is similar to one put to the Commons Select Committee on Education, when it carried out its inquiry into higher education, by Dr George Brosan, then director of North East London Polytechnic.

John O'Leary reports on an issue which the NAB is still far from resolving

Dr Brosan's plan would have been more localized and would have gone further, grouping together all post-secondary institutions in a given area (perhaps a city or a number of authorities) to form a single institution, dubbed a consortium. Although his ideas were not adopted by the committee, the idea of using transport to meet and talk with young people in the colleges.

The decision not to bring witnesses to Westminster but rather to seek them out was taken on the grounds that coherent evidence is more easily obtainable from local authorities on the spot. Moreover MPs wish to meet and talk with young people in the colleges.

The inquiry started by the Commission on the New Technical Vocational Education Initiative. It is likely that before the report is out—this may be before Easter—Mr Young will be asked again to answer points which have arisen during the regional visits. The committee particularly wants Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Education, and Mr Norman Tebbit, the Secretary of State for Employment, to take note of its findings.

Middlesbrough, where deserted streets occasionally lined with dilapidated buildings express a despair of their own, was an extremely appropriate setting for an inquiry which as it turned out concentrated heavily on the impact of unemployment and the MSC's new initiatives on education.

Since 1974 the county's youth unemployment has risen by nearly 1,000 per cent, and Cleveland now has 10,000 young people unemployed. Slightly more than half are on special schemes with the remainder on the dole. The number of reported vacancies in December was eight.

None of these young people, either because they have exhausted their entitlement to schemes or because of their age, will be able to obtain a place on the YTS, a dangerous problem likely to be repeated in other parts of the country.

Added to this, apprenticeships in the county have fallen dramatically in the last three years. Only 500 school-leavers were taken on apprenticeships in 1982, more than a third less than in 1979.

This is likely to worsen with the advent of the YTS, as is shown by the pilot YTS scheme being run by ICI Wilton with Longlands College. The company has decided to take on normal apprenticeships but instead has recruited 197 young people, only 80 of whom stand a chance of full apprenticeships and jobs at the end of the scheme.

The economic difficulties being experienced by Cleveland will be a fundamental factor in the take-up of the YTS which the Government and the MSC want to be employer-led, early decision.



St Hilda's, Middlesbrough... a bleak spot for youth opportunity.

Backstreet blues

Five Select Committee MPs began their inquiry into training and education for teenagers in Cleveland... Patricia Santinelli reports

Cleveland, one of the bleakest spots in the North East and one of the highest unemployment areas in mainland Great Britain, was the first stop on a five MP's conducting a 14-day education inquiry into the more prosperous and lush pastures of Hampshire and then complete their tour later in February by visiting Richmond-upon-Thames.

The MPs—Conservative Tim Brinton and David Madel, and Labour Tom Flannery, Christopher Price and John McWilliam of the Commons Select Committee for Education—had to limit their inquiry to these three places because of lack of time. But the areas in question were specifically selected because it was felt that they could give a broad picture of the 14-19 field.

The decision not to bring witnesses to Westminster but rather to seek them out was taken on the grounds that coherent evidence is more easily obtainable from local authorities on the spot. Moreover MPs wish to meet and talk with young people in the colleges.

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The economic difficulties being experienced by Cleveland will be a fundamental factor in the take-up of the YTS which the Government and the MSC want to be employer-led, early decision.

On the whole, both councillors and officers seemingly bent over backwards to stress that cooperation with the MSC was excellent. But it transpired that this was not so "excellent" as depicted. It appeared there was a fundamental disagreement between the careers service and the MSC about their respective roles in job creation schemes.

The MSC representative argued heatedly that the careers service had no role there and should not attempt to establish such schemes as it lacked expertise and contact with employers. This was hotly contested by the careers service which said that it had had a role in this area long before the advent of the MSC and had wide experience in encouraging employers to set up schemes based on the service's knowledge of what young people need.

A little more sympathy but no concrete help was available from the MSC representatives over the imposition of eligibility rules which barred 17-18-year-olds from the scheme.

Changes but that these were unlikely as it was already difficult to cope with the number of young people scheduled for the YTS within existing government resources.

He stressed—and it was a refrain that was to the heard often during the meeting—that the YTS would give young people better preparation to get jobs or be retrained as a desirable investment by employers. Another issue that emerged during the proceedings was the proposed tertiary reorganization in the county and the impact of the YTS on the two proposed options.

The choice apparently is between a system where there would be increased cooperation between sixth form colleges and further education colleges, or the merger of these institutions into tertiary colleges. At the moment there are eight sixth form colleges and six FE establishments, including an art college.

It became clear that there is no unanimity on the subject either between councillors or officers. The chief education officer admitted that the capital cost of tertiary colleges would be high, but he did not regard a 10 per cent increase in recurrent costs as a major drawback.

This was obviously anathema to one of the Conservative councillors who in a fist-banging session declared that his party would oppose such a development virulently. The YTS, it was felt, could have a substantial impact on either options mainly because of the economic recession which might render the scheme the only avenue to real employment, as more companies decided to take young people strictly on this basis.

The chief education officer feared that this coupled with the £25 a week allowance would directly affect recruitment to sixth form colleges which recently had been disappointing.

It would be ironic if an initiative to support the county council has given its full support should have the effect of undermining its own efforts," he said.

A stimulant for India's intellectuals

While most campuses are riven by strife a handful of institutes in New Delhi are improving the level of debate. A. S. Abraham reports

India's universities have probably never been in such a shambles. Throughout the country, campuses are marked by strife, strikes and scandals. Three of the most lavishly endowed and prestigious ones—Jawahar Lal Nehru University in Delhi, All India Muslim University in Uttar Pradesh, and Banaras Hindu University, also in Uttar Pradesh—have been all but paralysed by strife among student unions and between them and the university administrations, by examination scandals and by charges of gross nepotism and corruption.

These three are among a handful of higher education institutions directly run by the federal government. For that reason, they get more money, their staff are paid better and their student intake, from all over the country, is claimed to be of above-average quality.

For all that, they have reached a dead end.

Most Indian universities come under the jurisdiction of provincial or state governments, and here the picture is not brighter. Delhi University is recovering from a 14-week long teachers' strike that has thrown term schedules out of gear. Bombay University, still nursing the wounds from an examination boycott by teachers last year, as a result of which the current academic year began almost a whole term late, has had to appoint a special officer to ensure that examinations are held and results declared on time. One way this is sought to be done is by cutting the syllabus.

In the south, marks scandals in universities in Kerala are being probed, as the credibility of its certificates is being questioned. In Karnataka, the reservation of seats for the poor in medical colleges. One consequence of the strike was the automatic promotion of a mass of students to the next year. Again, certification lost all credibility. In Bihar, notoriously corrupt and caste-ridden, examinations have been reduced to a farce as each vice-



Mrs Gandhi's alienation from academics is near total

chancellor ensures that his caste kin monopolize the first-class lists.

In Assam in the north-east, students have been spearheading a three-year-old campaign against "foreigners" (mostly Bangladeshi immigrants) in the state, a movement that has totally disrupted campus life. And in West Bengal, where a Marxist government has been in office since June 1977, the *bhadrak* (middle-class) of Calcutta have taken to the streets in protest against alleged Marxist indoctrination of school-children by rewriting textbooks and against the dissolution of secondary and higher education bodies prior to their reconstitution with pro-government majorities.

Only one kind of institution can be said to have kept its head academically above water. These are the Indian Institutes of Technology. In reckoning, these institutions are the only ones in India that have not suffered from the reservation of seats for the poor. In India, the reservation of seats for the poor is a possible for poor but bright students and up-to-date, emphasizing scientific, technical and humanistic learning.

IITs are not free of trouble; one recurring bone of contention is, again the reservations policy, which inevitably keeps out some bright sparks who are neither Untouchable nor tribal (the two groups covered by reservations).

But, by and large, IIT campuses hum with the best kind of student endeavour: experimental projects, extra-curricular activity, debate and contention, games, and a high standard of routine course work. Every year, IITs organize week-long festivals of intellectual and cultural accomplishment. These have become prestigious events in which some of India's most eminent figures take part.

The high IQ level of the student body guarantees that their time is not wasted, making the festivals a showcase of campus excellence and one benefit from this investment in education. Yet, the country does not benefit from this investment in education. For the most part, both teachers and students in Indian universities are bogged down in bread-and-butter issues. Teachers demand higher salaries, lighter workloads (to give them more time for productive leisure) and better working conditions. Students want thinner syllabi, lenient

marking, lower fees, bus and train fare concessions, and so on. One outcome of this concern with "bottom-line" issues is the unionization of academics.

As hotbeds of opposition to Mrs Gandhi's increasingly repressive rule, universities were among the main targets of victimization during the Emergency. When it was lifted, the heightened radicalization of academics was conspicuous in their total (and continuing) rejection of all Mrs Gandhi stood for, in their support for the Janata Party in the 1977 poll, which saw Mrs Gandhi unseated from office, and in their militancy when pressing their professional demands.

Like academics everywhere, those in India are broadly left-of-centre, though this often mingles uneasily with a utopian rural reconstructionist panacea for India's ills. Of late, however, the influence in northern universities, not least Delhi, of right-wing Hindu conservatism, as represented by the Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party), has become visible.

But academics of a liberal or radical persuasion see eye to eye with those of a conservative-religious cast of mind on opposing the "Congress five-star culture" that Mrs Gandhi and the party she heads are believed to represent. Mrs Gandhi's alienation from India's academics and intellectuals is near-total.

They may not agree on what the alternative to her should be, but they are convinced that she is the fount of all the country's political and social ills and so must go. They have not been impressed by what they feel to be the circus she has lavished so much time and money on.

The Festival of India in Mumbai, the forthcoming non-aligned summit conference in New Delhi in March will be a third. They have been jubilant at her electoral rout in January in the two Southern states, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, which were until now her strongest bastions. Perhaps because academics have



been primarily engaged in improving their social and economic position, they have not been able to provide the kind of intellectual and scholastic leadership they do in Western societies. Apart from the universities, however, there are a handful of specialized research institutes in the humanities and the social sciences, many of them concentrated in New Delhi, which have been an intellectual stimulant to Indian society at large.

Figures like Rajni Kothari, Ashis Nandy and K. N. Raj have been engaged in the most rigorous and adventurous kind of conceptual thinking; they have helped to draw up the agenda of intellectual debate nationwide. Sociologists like Dr Andre Beteille (an Indian party of French origin), who is a university academic, have also made major contributions.

But it is journalism rather than academia which sets the tone of intellectual life in India. The phenomenal expansion of English-language journalism and of journalism in the major Indian languages in recent years, coupled with the use of advanced printing technology in especially magazine journalism, have given journalism an unprecedentedly vital role in defining India's intellectual concerns. Naturally, it draws heavily on academics, even as academics shabbily get-up, withered away.

This is a sign of the times. For with spreading literacy and education, India is fast acquiring the elements of a mass popular culture. The Festival of India in Mumbai, the forthcoming non-aligned summit conference in New Delhi in March will be a third. They have been jubilant at her electoral rout in January in the two Southern states, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, which were until now her strongest bastions. Perhaps because academics have

try, was partly intended to scare academics. (In the event, it turned out to be less drastic than anticipated). The idea of importing lecturers from abroad can also be construed as a threat to Turkish staff.

Such claims are plausible, but extreme. Most lecturers have reacted to the present situation either by trying to ignore it and work as before (or rather, even harder than before, in view of increased teaching obligations which could pose a major obstacle to research) or by adopting an indifferent attitude, spending as little time on campus as possible.

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Freedom of the present pressures on academic freedom can the universities continue to set trends? Given the intermittent public criticism of the HEC—not all of it from the left—can the universities retain their respectability? In view of the state of the social sciences in particular, can educational improvement be expected only in technical subjects? Much depends on how soon the depression moves away. But with General Evren elected president for the next seven years (unopposed) and the HEC written into the constitution, the prospects are not good.

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Bernard Kennedy

Regional planning runs into delay

The directness and speed with which contentious issues have been raised, faced and, on the whole, dispatched is a justifiable source of pride within the National Advisory Body. Even some sensitive questions which did not demand to be raised in the NAB's first year—notably the matter of an increased proportion of two-year courses—have been met square on.

Yet there is one fundamental issue which remains far from settled one third of the way through the national body's initial term of office. It is the question of a regional structure, which was given its own high-powered working group when the NAB was set up a year ago. The group is chaired by Mr Christopher Ball, chairman of the board, and numbers sufficient of the leading institutional representatives among its members to have been proposed (unsuccessfully) as a kind of executive committee for the NAB during the first few months.

Not surprisingly, the group soon came to the conclusion, in answer to the first question it faced, that some form of regional organization was necessary if the body was to reflect the determination of Mr Ball and of the NAB committee to maintain a genuinely local higher education system. Indeed, the NAB secretariat was given specific regional responsibilities, each assistant secretary liaising with two regional advisory councils outside London.

By last November, guided by discussions on the board's needs at the board's residential weekend in Oxford, the group had also identified the role which the outlying parts of the structure might play, at least in the medium term. For the purpose of the immediate planning exercise to draw up a national plan to meet the Government's target of 10 per cent cuts, it was accepted that the existing RACs would have to provide regional advice because of time constraints. And in the longer term, the group that existed at the time of the

own proposals redefined. It was agreed that the regional bodies would have to operate within the general policy guidelines determined by the NAB and carry out tasks requested by the central body.

No close organizational link was envisaged between the NAB and the regional bodies, each retaining a similar degree of autonomy to that enjoyed by the RACs. Internal organization, membership and finance of the regions would be left for local determination with three suggestions only to be put to the local authority associations and the RACs. These were (and are) that the membership of individual bodies should be "acceptable, politically and academically" to employers and trade unions and include representatives of the universities and the voluntary sector; that there should be links between the NAB and the regions at member and officer level; and that their internal organization should not result in increased operating costs.

Consultation has begun on all of these points but still there is no favoured model for the regional structure itself. Three alternatives have been put forward by the group and accepted by the NAB board and committee, all of them well rehearsed in recent years but none with the official stamp of approval.

The first is to retain the RACs or something very like them—"territorial regions" based on groups of local authorities. This was the solution favoured by the Labour government when the last Labour government proposed its own national body for higher education. The Oakes report proposed nine new regional bodies based on the RAC, but possibly with different boundaries. Stripped of their responsibilities for course approvals, the new councils were to employ their own staff and be funded by their constituent local authorities. Large "umbrella bodies" were to include university representatives, the inspectorate and members of the national body itself, while "small" executive committees would deal with day-to-day work.

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Finally, there is the most radical choice which was worked out by Professor Keith Clayton, the University Grants Committee representative on the NAB board and a member of the group examining regional policy. This proposal is for 24 "commuting areas" based on the feasibility of travel to colleges and polytechnics within the region. The scheme is similar to one put to the Commons Select Committee on Education, when it carried out its inquiry into higher education, by Dr George Brown, then director of North East London Polytechnic.

Dr Brown's plan would have been more localized and would have gone further, grouping together all post-secondary institutions in a given area (perhaps a city or a number of authorities) to form a single institution, dubbed a consortium. Although his ideas were not adopted by the committee, the idea of using transport links as the basis for grouping together institutions was well received. Indeed, it was one of the

Commission on the New Technical Vocational Education Initiative. It is likely that before the report is out—this may be before Easter—Mr Young will be asked again to answer points which have arisen during the regional visits. The committee particularly wants Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Education, and Mr Norman Tebbit, the Secretary of State for Employment, to take note of its findings.

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Backstreet blues

Five Select Committee MPs began their inquiry into training and education for teenagers in Cleveland... Patricia Santinelli reports

Cleveland, one of the bleakest spots in the North East and one of the highest unemployment areas in mainland Great Britain, was the first stop last month for five MPs conducting a wide-ranging regional inquiry into 14-19 education and training.

Next week, in contrast they move to the more prosperous and lush pastures of Hampshire and then complete their tour later in February by visiting Richmond-upon-Thames.

The MPs—Conservative Tim Brinton and David Madel, and Labour Tom Flannery, Christopher Price and John McWilliam of the Commons Select Committee for Education—had to limit their inquiry to these three places because of lack of time. But the areas in question were specifically selected because it was felt that they could give a broad picture of the 14-19 field.

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The MSC representative argued heatedly that the careers service had no role there and should not attempt to establish such schemes as it lacked expertise and contact with employers. This was hotly contested by the careers service which said that it had had a role in this area long before the advent of the MSC and had wide experience in encouraging employers to set up schemes based on the service's knowledge of what young people needed.

A little more sympathy but no concrete help was available from the MSC representatives over the imposition of eligibility rules which barred 17-18 year olds from many changes but that these were unnecessary as it was already difficult to cope with the number of young people scheduled for the YTS within existing government resources.

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Another issue that emerged during the proceedings was the proposed tertiary reorganization in the county and the impact of the YTS on the two proposed options.

The choice apparently is between a system where there would be increased cooperation between sixth form colleges and further education institutions into tertiary colleges. At the moment there are eight sixth form colleges and six FE establishments, including an art college.

It became clear that there is no unanimity on the subject either between councillors or officers. The chief education officer admitted that the capital cost of tertiary colleges would be high, but he did not regard a 10 per cent increase in recurrent costs as a major drawback.

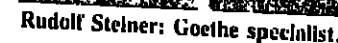
This was obviously anathema to one of the Conservative councillors who in a fast-banging session declared that his party would oppose such a development virulently.

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A history of mystery

Geoffrey Ahern
traces the tradition
of esoteric thought
in Western culture



W. B. Yeats: poet first and foremost

**COLIN
McCABE**

study has undergone what amounts to a Copernican revolution.

Below, seven academics, each involved in English teaching, give their personal views on what Ian Watt has elsewhere called "the complete diversity – or disarray – of contemporary opinion about what literature and its criticism is or should be".

PETER WIDDOWSON

In the brief for this symposium, one phrase leads straight to the heart of the matter: "the value of critical theory in literature teaching". What the phrase assumes is a discrete activity - "critical theory" - within the larger area - "literature teaching". It is a long-standing assumption in English schools (and one which is, paradoxically, responsible for the present debate) that the teaching of literature is, in its com-

Courses in the history and theory of literary criticism there may be – even courses in contemporary critical theory – but these are seen as separate aspects of the discipline, the main business of which remains the detailed analysis and understanding of literary texts. And these are usually the “great works” or “masterpieces” – in whose canonization the criteria of value are for staff to know and students to find out.

No study of literary works, of course, is ever theory free. The most mundane of critical practices – say,

practical criticism - is informed by a theory of how to "read" texts; the selection of the syllabus is an evaluation of the value of the texts; the evaluation of the texts is based on theories of literary value.

The central question "Why read literature?" is never put, and therefore never answered, and

primary material" (*vide* most bibliographies) of English, the texts themselves are seen as naturally th-

**DAVID
HOLBROOK**

type of investigation and new criticism has been remarked upon by writers such as Raymond Williams) to discussion of the historical forces shaping and transforming those structures on the one hand. On the other hand it has moved to an analysis of our subjective investment in language, an analysis in which the influence of psychoanalytic theory with its emphasis on the question of sexuality has been decisive.

These emphases then extend and relate to feminist criticism in this country and the United States; the history of women's writing; one of the accents in which women have had a voice; how does this fact relate to their exclusion from other areas of public life?; how far can sexuality and gender be seen to determine the formal properties of writing? Here begin the questions of history and form come together, since the problem is always stressed that the feminist have the institutional presence, of women and the available forms of expression and speech for women, are inseparable.

Winceding the striking omission of feminism from so much of the official and public debate about literature at a time when there is, for example, only one full-time woman professor in English at the University of Sussex in the Faculty of 26 (a situation unlikely to be remedied in the present economic climate), I feel the force of that conviction ironically reasserting itself. At the very least, it makes nonsense of the pretensions to radicalism of many of the participants in the present debate.

**DAVID
HOLBROOK**

tribute to even greater wrong. And in any case, it is philosophy that is wrong. F. R. Leavis was right to insist that kind of tendency to "philosophy" for a response to literature.

The kind of "statement" philosophers concern themselves with is radically from what literature is. When we respond to literature, we live through an experience that is not a statement of a philosophical position.

the art enacts its meaning
of the disciplined image
which the trained reader
one in which we "possess
suit of meaning and value
with" the experience of

But Leavis was wrong in openly discussing a possibility for English. That, of course, we want, and it is a mark of confusion that we have it. The need is for reference philosophies that can encompass the kind of response we train. Leavis there were such philosophers. Michael Dillard

Only "reflective" p

save us here; what
sophical anthropology
philosophy which incl
ophy of being. Here, w
phenomenology
philosophical biology
and post-Kantian phil
ers like Ernst Cassirer
ger, Polanyi, Husserl
the European traditio
into a consideration o

Much of the current debate about English studies is presented as a debate for or against "theory." For myself, any such debate is both tedious and irrelevant and never more so than when it focuses on demands for papers on critical theory. Such a demand effectively ignores, and thereby exacerbates, the real problem of our relation to a corpus of literary texts, many of whose cultural and ideological assumptions we no longer share and whose linguistic forms are increasingly difficult.

one cannot avoid because they pose almost all of the problems critical theory has always placed before us. But what good would a reading of great texts be that contended itself with being compulsory and did not enhance one's critical abilities? Literature's value shouldn't be made into mere moral or intellectual commodities, something one should have "under one's belt" before making an appearance in the world. Rather, all literary creators have to struggle with the problems of form, of meaning, of transparency and/or opacity, of textual economy, of psychological investment or recoil, of relationship between socially inherited values and the subversive or cooperative power of their own voices. The *lecteurs* cipherers, *liseurs* into *lecteurs*. Literature is a school for scandal; no literary approach may come forward without a modicum of explicit theory and not be slightly dishonest. Our responsibility to "great texts" is not only to make sure that uncritical respect for them is handed over from generation to generation unscathed, but to enrich them daily by showing how unskirtable they are because they "work" even from a "new" standpoint, because their resilience to reduction and recuperation is demonstrably enhanced by a new set of analytical tools. How much more fascinating innumerable writers become for having been enabled to deliver their reflections on the world as texts that had all but disappeared or become commonplace because they did not fit the canons of their times or serve them too closely. How could one even consider including contemporary writers in their curricula if one had no sense of his own criteria? Make them public, advertise them, offer them for debate without ever allowing one particular critical theory to dominate hegemonically, as was too often the case. There are no noble texts and shameful texts. Most-often texts, among which one is free to offer the one he believes are the most satisfactory, because of explicitly analysed and presented standards. Merely *reproduction* and *reproduction*.

...then amounts to a "cop-out" that transforms literature into a mere top supplement for the cultured instead of the extraordinary place it is in. Teaching literature does not mean equating it with someone who is required of social travellers; nor to transform consumers of discursive goods into critically aware individuals, psalmodists into de-

All histories are written by winners and "the great tradition" certainly does not escape the rule. It is impossible to keep looking in the distance for the reemergence of authors who, in their own time, "didn't quite make it" because critical attention was obfuscated by the then prevalent frame of mind. It is one of recent critical theories' pretensions to honour to have helped rehabilitate

length for the joys of intellectual doubt. In this debate, the only really distressing thing is to see two righteously and rigidly entrenched camps having it out, sticking to their guns, arteries hardened, masks congealed, sclerosis setting in.

The author is professor of American literature at the Université d'Orléans.

the dynamics of the consciousness and unconsciousness such as will illuminate our work, in English as a humanities discipline.

In certain areas, such as that of existentialist psychotherapy, we find the influence of the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, who urged that humanity needs above all to find a meaning in its existence, before it becomes nothingness. This seems to me to be echoed throughout philo-

JOHN BROADBENT

We used to let "critical history and theory" die of terminal care in a final paper, but surely no longer? Of course we need theory. "The most urgent need of all," wrote Jerome Bruner of education generally, "is to give our pupils the experience of using a theoretical model."

their academic values; and where we practise our subjective resources by association, access to dream; imaginative writing. Theory needs commitment, personal as well as political.

Theory advances when one zone of inquiry is lit by a metaphor from another. Text, language, paradigm are such metaphors. When Doris Lessing shifted from political novel to *Canopus* she showed where criticism is going now. The new metaphors are system and group (Widen, Bion), de-

social anthropology, which concerns itself with humans as the *animal symbolicum*, whose primary need is for meaning. Moreover, of course, this kind of philosophy, in the wake of Nietzsche's and Kierkegaard's kind of emphasis, does not tend to towards either the abstract or the merely intellectual: it seeks the fulfilment of the individual person, in his or her uniqueness, in "life".

The present demand for more literary theory, alas, moves in quite a different direction. It seeks to use literary texts, as Strickland has argued, to erect cunning but abstract

Students have presented me with extraordinary achievements in return for mere suggestions about theory as method. Two students' *SIZ*-tag analysis of the end of Joyce's *Dead* is still with me, and still extensible; an anthropological analysis of Lawrence's *Christening*; a linguistic analysis of part of *Moby Dick*, and many critiques joyfully informed by the power of theoretical models to open poems. (Joyfully like the sun who rejoices as a strong man, or in these cases often strong women, to run a race, to find their feet, to run before they can walk, and walk without me.)

literary theories. Commitment to engagement with the authors' attempts to find meaning in their struggle with experience even tends to make experience (even texts) more unspokeable, taboo, to become even unspeakable. In this, there arises a new taboo on the very admission of one's humanness, a taboo on the need for meaning in existence itself.

In the end, even this demand for mere intellectual systems, in which to live, instead of the world of human experience and struggle, could simply deepen our predicament, by simply deepening our studies their

Another way of handling theory is represented by Kate Beley's account in *Literature Teaching: Politics of a Class* which studied *Wuthering Heights* and criticism of it — Cech, Eagleton etc. — in relation to one another. This text, in relation to the critical stances are; and what the implications are of their assumptions (and if they have any) theory.

Yet those of my colleagues who are most skilled in theory seem most sceptical: they turn to a more personal way, or to non-academic life. And

vice will be useful to us as much about theory. Theory will be as much about humans as about literature. Subjectivity may be trained, by institutional writing, encounter. We shall work interpretative contradictions, interpretive as well as departmental; they will be reflexive, interpretative about their own structure, gender, behaviour. That is where coherence and consistency will come from: not from a doctrine but the community's or reflexive work. Practised with generative theory.

The author is a fellow of Downing College, Cambridge.

The possibility of undertaking a course which will cover English literature from Chaucer to the present day is now so manifestly absurd that it can only cause the claim that such a course can be taught are not routinely met with howls of derision. How do you teach courses on English literature to students who know nothing of Christianity? Who is the point of asking students to read a piece of discursive prose from the sixteenth or seventeenth century when the current dominance of spoken forms of the language, particularly on television, means that sentences of any complexity are seldom used?

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Weidenfeld & Nicolson

An edition of James Clerk Maxwell's essay *A Dynamical Theory of the Electromagnetic Field*, presented to the Royal Society in 1864, with an appreciation by Albert Einstein, has been edited with an introduction by T. F. Torrance and published by Scottish Academic Press at £7.50.

BOOKS

EDUCATION

Making plans

Challenge and Change in the Curriculum
edited by Tim Horton and Peter Raggatt
Hodder & Stoughton and the Open University, £4.60
ISBN 0 340 28774 8

Planning in the Curriculum
edited by Victor Lee and David Zeldin
Hodder & Stoughton and the Open University, £4.95
ISBN 0 340 28775 6

In increasing numbers of secondary schools, the days are gone when a sound grasp of a subject and firm classroom control were the only yardsticks by which we judged a good teacher. The 1980s teacher must participate in decision-making, policy-making and the management of large departments – even faculties – which means responsibility for introducing pupils to expanding realms of knowledge selected from the ever-growing fund of human wisdom and learning. There are also the political obstacles from groups, inside and outside the school, namely, the DES, the i.e.a.s, parents, governors, exam boards and disputing factions of teachers within the school, all mindful of the new religions of accountability and evaluation. These two books, readers for the Open University course "Purpose and Planning in the Curriculum" show the wider professional teachers are now expected to demonstrate.

My second regret also concerns a missing factor or alternative. While the ideological foundations of certain curriculum approaches are well represented here, such as the social democratic model and the radical-libertarian view, the new scholarship based on a Marxist perspective, from France, the UK and the USA, is totally absent from these pages. Is it too late to add this to the curriculum?

Barry Dufour

tradition. The essays on the management of innovation range over strategies and examples taken from several countries including Per Dabius on the organization of school knowledge and Elizabeth Richardson's discussion of the continuous staff conference.

The second book has a more practical orientation with articles on curriculum models, classroom research and teaching styles by some of the well-known names from both sides of the Atlantic. Curriculum studies is seen as a form of applied research. Many of the selections are seminal pieces from books and journals which are assembled here in a very accessible form. What I found refreshing was the attempt to include writings of an "anti-curriculum" nature, representing the more open-ended approach to subjects and pupils. There is an article on a Danish free school, a piece by the American radical, Carl Rogers, and an extract from "Teaching as a Subversive Activity" by fellow Americans Weingartner and Postman.

But it is here that my reservations about the two books are located. I felt that the discussion of "alternatives" was somewhat restricted in two ways. First, although a few of the authors seem to acknowledge that the object of their grand schemes, namely the pupils, might conceivably have opinions on the way they are educated, nowhere in these collections do we find this properly explored. When will curriculum-mongers accept that the pupils are an integral part of their models and flow charts and possess unique realities as individuals which must be taken into account?

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Not just statistics

The Self-Evaluating Institution: practice and principles in the management of educational change
by Clem Adelman and Robin J. Alexander
Methuen, £10.95 and £5.50
ISBN 0 416 32740 0 and 32750 8

Keeping Track of Teaching: assessment in the modern classroom
by Harry Black and Patricia Broadfoot
Routledge & Kegan Paul, £5.95
ISBN 0 7100 9017 X

During a period of financial cutback and attendant calls for accountability books on evaluation and assessment will become numerous. However, they will not necessarily be books that relate narrowly to testing for selection or insist on punitive accountability. Here are two books from very different traditions, that see assessment more positively: a means of improving and strengthening the professional skills of educators.

Clem Adelman and Robin J. Alexander have produced penetrating case studies of institutional evaluation, in two institutes of higher education. Harry Black and Patricia Broadfoot have written a useful book about a wide variety of classroom assessment procedures.

Their approach is broad enough to include pupil self-assessment and course evaluation as well as the more usual "cognitive assessment" and therefore overlaps with the concerns of Adelman and Alexander. Between them they demonstrate the substantial development that there has been over the last ten years, since Freddie Sparrow edited the Schools Council's *Evaluation in Curriculum Development: twelve case studies*.

Gone are the days when a knowledge of assessment meant simply a knowledge of statistics. The growth of the field has been remarkable, and the techniques

evaluation of particular aspects of the curriculum. Understanding the implications of assessment must clearly be associated with decisions about the curriculum and the philosophy of the school. Only Sir Keith Joseph seems to understand this simple but important lesson and persists in separating the Examination Council from the Schools Council. The teachers at Uphill seem more able to learn: "The more they thought about what they were doing the more the teachers at Uphill were appalled at some of their past practices".

Adelman and Alexander's book is centrally about the internal politics of institutional evaluation. Adelman's evaluation of Enlands, a modern thrustful institution priding itself on its open academic approach to learning, quickly ran into trouble as the confident expansionism of the sixties ran into cutbacks and restraints from the Council for National Academic Awards. In addition the college soon learned that the practice of evaluation was not as easily coped with as the idea of evaluation. Adelman found that the open circulation of his reports was curtailed and a "discussion group" set up to receive them. His study of institutional change was pushed towards the less threatening areas of student choice. The account of these difficulties and the subsequent attempts to overcome them make interesting reading and are a valuable addition to the literature.

Alexander's appointment as "adviser on evaluation" in Chichester College was an internal one. It represented a broader and confounding commitment to course evaluation. Despite a smoother initial period of difficulties, Alexander's evaluation is difficult to receive in an institution where the evaluation is inevitably taken on a political meaning. The value of the book lies in its description of the evaluation process and the clarification of some of the issues raised by this kind of research.

The presentation of data is relegated to supporting this descriptive stance.

The book contains a useful introduction to the field of evaluation; however, the literature review reveals that in an area which is so loosely integrated it is possible for experienced practitioners to overlook work that bears importantly on the issues they are discussing. Adelman, for example, states with confidence the Schools Council's official line that the lack of success of large-scale curriculum projects led it to give support to local initiatives with a high degree of teacher involvement. But he does not refer to the reports by Stephen Steadman and his colleagues on the "Impact and Take-up" of the council's projects. The reports show quite clearly that the lack of success could not have been the reason for the Schools Council's change of policy. Similarly, Alexander refers to his evaluation of Chichester as "the first major 'internal' institutional evaluation in British teacher education". While this might be true in a strict sense he does not mention a prior evaluation of the Sussex Postgraduate Certificate of Education which was available in 1972 as a Social Science Research Council report and was published, in part, in a similar Methuen series in 1977.

Black and Broadfoot take us directly into the problems of assessment through the device of inventing two schools: Old Normgrade with its continuous assessment and letter-grades and Hilltop Primary with its checklist and recording sheets. The design and procedure for each method of assessment used in the schools is clearly set out and each is sympathetically discussed. Hilltop contrasts with Normgrade in wishing to relate assessment to the individual needs of the child and this extends beyond academic achievement to

personal and social development. The book is particularly strong in introducing in a sensible, non-technical way the techniques for the assessment of individual learning.

Each stage of the school career is dealt with in turn. There is an important section on pupil self-assessment and the effect of this kind of assessment on learning. Other important issues relating to accountability and assessment are raised but not fully explored. Finally there is a useful chapter on profile reporting and its application to school learning and job applications.

This is a practical book based on examples and illustration. Perhaps it is therefore unfair to criticize it for its lack of critical awareness and its failure to discuss some of the deeper implications of assessment and evaluation. I had put off my feeling of disappointment until the last chapter where Old Normgrade is revisited. The rather stale repetition of previous issues here allows the book to decline at its end; the hoped for analysis or critique of assessment was missing. It is quite illogical to suppose that because the authors are writing a book about how to improve assessment that they should omit a critique of assessment and its function in our society. The examination industry overloads the curriculum and has a "demoralizing and limiting effect" – particularly for low-achieving pupils. A fuller exploration of this and other limitations of the present system, like its effects of high-achieving pupils and its deeper implications for our society, would have made a stronger concluding chapter.

Colin Lacey

Colin Lacey is professor of education at the University of Sussex.

What do they do?

Directors of Education
by Maurice Chazan and Maurice Kogan
Methuen, £9.95 and £3.95pb X

In the years since the publication of Maurice Kogan's previous study, *What do they do?*, the role of the Chief Education Officer (CEO) has changed in ways which were barely predictable.

True, local government reorganization was then already planned and moves towards corporate management structures were under way, but the circumstances of the middle and later 1970s were such that many of the basic tenets which underpinned the work and attitudes of the three CEOs interviewed in 1972 have been swept aside. Another look at the new volume is a reminder of an almost forgotten fact: a reminder of continuous expansion and rising expectations. By the time of the next batch of interviews (1980), with four different CEOs, new authorities were well established, corporate management had come (and in some places gone), local government was more politicized, central-local relationships were in a state of flux and, most significant of all, growth had been replaced by shrinkage; not surprisingly the edited transcripts feature all of these issues. In addition a postal questionnaire elicited responses from 61 of the 100 or so remaining CEOs and their selected comments flavour the narrative sections of background information and descriptive analysis with which the book starts. Significantly, the qualitative approach (allowing the CEOs to reflect in a largely unstructured way on the problems and situations they face) is far more revealing, confirming what we did not realize it already: the job is concerned above all with attitudes, interactions, politics and interpersonal skills. Most clearly, each CEO has to function in a local political context.

This new study is valuable, as well as overdue. It updates our perceptions of the role of the CEO, a post which remains dominant in the education hierarchy; although corporate management has had some impact there is little evidence here, or elsewhere, to support the view that the performance of the CEO is irrelevant to the quality of the local education service. As might be expected it is the concerns of the 1970s which dominate. In some cases the experiences of reorganization (e.g. Adams of South Glamorgan lost a job which might have expected of a corporate manager (Derrick Williams of Avon resigned in protest) these highlight relevant issues (and the inclusion of Eric Briault of LEA, so that the infamous William Tyndale School can be considered) but exaggerate the effect, resulting in an interesting but atypical sample of CEOs. Only Bob Aiken of Coventry seems to be fully aware of the emerging issues which will dominate the education system during the 1980s (but this is not really surprising since both Adams and Briault left office in 1977). Unfortunately, as a result of timing and selection of the interviewees, the expanding activities of the MSC, the likely effects of the Local Government Planning and Land Act, 1980, the implications of continuing high levels of structural unemployment, the certainty of fewer pupils and the probability of fewer resources, receive scant attention. It would now be instructive to have the views of some CEOs on the dramatic changes affecting the education service since the last round of interviews; particularly from the newer breed of CEOs likely to be in office until the end of the century.

There still remains the question, however, of what CEOs (and for that matter other education officers and headteachers) actually do. From the evidence of these interviews there is still a view of the CEO as an educationalist acting as an administrator, as opposed to a professional manager. In the light of current developments this will be an increasingly difficult argument to sustain, if the status and power of the position is to be retained. The need for Mintzberg-Stewart types of study, both analyzing the skills required for the job and work patterns that have emerged, is clear. Without them it is difficult to envisage how recently announced DES plans for management training programmes for senior staff can have a firm basis.

W. F. Dennison

Dr Dennison is senior lecturer in education at the University of New Castle.

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BOOKS

EDUCATION

Radical profession

The Cautious Expert: an analysis of developments in the practice of educational psychology
by John C. Quicke
Open University Press, £14.95
ISBN 0 335 10110 0

Educational psychologists still do not constitute a large professional group, but since the mid-1960s the number of psychologists in the education service in England and Wales has grown rapidly, to an establishment of about 1,000 at the present time. During this period, too, there have been changes in the role of the educational psychologist, stemming, in part, from a search for a professional identity, but also from new demands and pressures. These have resulted mainly from local government reorganization and legislative measures affecting the health, social and educational services as well as from expanding knowledge in relevant areas of psychology.

Many educational psychologists today would readily fit the description of eclectic using, as John Quicke puts it, "bits and pieces" from various theories and approaches. However, perhaps the main change in educational psychology is the perception of their role has been seen in terms of the traditional clinical model, with the emphasis on individual children as "cases", to being concerned with modifying the school system through the more general application of psychological knowledge and skills. In this book, Quicke seeks to clarify the conflict between "status quo maintaining" and "radical change" among educational psychologists, leading up to an exposition, admittedly tentative and incomplete, of his own ideas for a more radical profession.

The first two chapters provide a concise but informative account of the educational psychologist's struggle, at times in the face of professional opposition, to achieve a full professional role, and of the rapid build-up of a school psychological service standing apart from the clinically orientated child guidance service. The emergence of a relatively independent profession of "educational psychologist" is outlined in the context of the growth of other professional groups, for example, local education authority advisers, school counsellors and remedial teachers, some of whose functions overlap with those of psychologists.

Chapter three is largely taken up with criticisms of the traditional "psychometric" approach, but in later chapters Quicke is just as ready to challenge practices in vogue such as behaviour modification and those derived from the "not-directive" style of Carl Rogers. His shafts are sharply focused, and he is willing to question assumptions often too easily accepted. However, he argues from an insufficiently firm basis of knowledge about what educational psychologists actually do. For example, no clear picture emerges, in the course of a lengthy discussion of the psychometric approach, of the ways in which educational psychologists actually use tests, and he wonders what evidence exists for some of the assumptions made, for instance, that in schools "traditional" psychologists typically align themselves with liberal ideology. Quicke does draw upon the responses to his own professional knowledge questionnaire, completed by 291 educational psychologists, but this is very superficial, limited in scope and supplemented by interviews with only nine, i.e. a psychological working in the same school psychological service.

The final chapter contains a useful discussion on how the educational psychologist can help to avoid the negative effects of labelling children, and some interesting suggestions for reforms in professional practices, based mainly on interactionist philosophy. This perspective is seen as one in which "the individual's needs are seen as socially constructed and the institution is not perceived as a series of relatively permanent social arrangements continually being subjected to negotiation and interpretation by participants".

The author attempts to spell out the implications of this stance for practice, but too sketchily for these concerns to remain at a rather abstract level, somewhat remote from the everyday concerns of practising psychologists. Some of Quicke's suggestions, for example, that the radical educational psychologist should relate to pressure groups both inside and outside school, seem likely to lead to disaster in the case of professionals who already tread a tight-rope in their dealings with a variety of individuals and agencies with differing frames of reference.

Quicke seems to underestimate the value to psychologists of assuming a detached position and of making an objective appraisal as possible of the problems with which they deal. Further, while it is attractive to make in the main to the importance of children and families through first hand contact. Perhaps, too, it is healthier at this stage to encourage a wider range of well-considered approaches to the practice of educational psychology rather than to accentuate the conflict between more extreme traditional and radical viewpoints.

The book is written in a lively style (apart from some lapses into obscure jargon) and is attractively produced, even if marred by a number of printing errors. However, it leaves the reader rather in the air, and it is likely to appeal to older and wiser educational psychologists rather than to the less experienced or those in training, who may well find it confusing.

Maurice Chazan is professor of education at the University College of Swansea.

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Quicke seems to underestimate the value to psychologists of assuming a detached position and of making an objective appraisal as possible of the problems with which they deal. Further, while it is attractive to make in the main to the importance of children and families through first hand contact. Perhaps, too, it is healthier at this stage to encourage a wider range of well-considered approaches to the practice of educational psychology rather than to accentuate the conflict between more extreme traditional and radical viewpoints.

The book is written in a lively style (apart from some lapses into obscure jargon) and is attractively produced, even if marred by a number of printing errors. However, it leaves the reader rather in the air, and it is likely to appeal to older and wiser educational psychologists rather than to the less experienced or those in training, who may well find it confusing.

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BOOKS

EDUCATION

Radical profession

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by John C. Quicke
Open University Press, £14.95
ISBN 0 335 10110 0

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The first two chapters provide a concise but informative account of the educational psychologist's struggle, at times in the face of professional opposition, to achieve a full professional role, and of the rapid build-up of a school psychological service standing apart from the clinically orientated child guidance service. The emergence of a relatively independent profession of "educational psychologist" is outlined in the context of the growth of other professional groups, for example, local education authority advisers, school counsellors and remedial teachers, some of whose functions overlap with those of psychologists.

Chapter three is largely taken up with criticisms of the traditional "psychometric" approach, but in later chapters Quicke is just as ready to challenge practices in vogue such as behaviour modification and those derived from the "not-directive" style of Carl Rogers. His shafts are sharply focused, and he is willing to question assumptions often too easily accepted. However, he argues from an insufficiently firm basis of knowledge about what educational psychologists actually do. For example, no clear picture emerges, in the course of a lengthy discussion of the psychometric approach, of the ways in which educational psychologists actually use tests, and he wonders what evidence exists for some of the assumptions made, for instance, that in schools "traditional" psychologists typically align themselves with liberal ideology. Quicke does draw upon the responses to his own professional knowledge questionnaire, completed by 291 educational psychologists, but this is very superficial, limited in scope and supplemented by interviews with only nine, i.e. a psychological working in the same school psychological service.

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microfilm

Looking back over microfilm's 50-year history, it is easy to trace four significant stages in the development of the industry as new techniques and innovations opened up an ever-widening range of applications.

In the pioneering days before the second world war when roll film was the predominant format, microfilm was regarded purely as a cost-effective way of saving space and preserving archival records and its use outside libraries was limited. Then, after the war, came the introduction of unilaminate cards, microfilm jackets and eventually microfiche and improvements in the design of readers and reader-printers. Microfilm came to be used extensively in the office for the storage and retrieval of business records and correspondence files and in the drawing office for the storage of engineering drawings, maps and plans.

The third major stage in the development of the microfilm industry came in the late 1960s when the introduction of Computer Output Microfilm (COM) led to the widespread use of microfilm for the storage and dissemination of electronically-generated information. We are currently witnessing the fourth stage - the era of convergence - when the microfilm industry finally accepted the fact that microfilm could not solve by itself all the information handling problems facing the librarian, the office manager or the drawing office supervisor. It started to look instead at the specific role that microfilm could play in the automated office or library of the future.

Convergence has been defined as the growing interface between microfilm and electronic systems and marks the growing realization among microfilm companies that they are just a part of the total information-processing community. The results of this convergence are already being seen in microfilm and microfilm-based systems.

Microfilm-based systems (books, etc.) and electronically-generated material are stored in a central microfilm store where they are accessible on-line by large numbers of users at remote locations via high resolution Cathode Ray Tube screens and communication channels.

In operation users search the on-line database via their screen, select the document they wish to view and activate the search procedure. A pulse is sent to the microfilm store and the relevant microfiche and frame of information is selected and scanned by an electronic scanner which digitizes the image. The digitized image can then be transmitted down the line to the user's remote CRT screen where it is displayed on the high resolution screen or printed out if required.

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1980s: era of the paperless office

These videomicrofilm systems look set to usher in the era of the paperless office. They involve the use of microfilm, video scanning, computer and communications technology and hence provide a perfect example of the advantages that convergence can bring. As we look in more detail at some of the latest developments in the microfilm world we will meet with countless examples of convergence at work, whether it be the use of microprocessors in microfilm production equipment or the ever-increasing use of computerized indexing techniques by micropublishers.

Computer Output Microfilm recorders were first introduced in the late 1960s and since then the equipment has been steadily refined and developed to improve the quality of output obtainable on a COM recorder, to make them easier to use and to increase their versatility. Today the majority of COM recorders are intelligent, microprocessor-controlled units that can be programmed to reformat data and automatically create indexes and titling information. Many can be operated online to mainframe computers just like traditional hard copy printers. Another trend in recent years has been the introduction of dry silver film COM recorders where the film is developed by a heat process so there is no need for wet chemicals in the data-processing environment.

The development of online, dry process COM recorders by companies like Kodak, 3M and Data-Graphic has undoubtedly widened the appeal of COM. Many large companies which formerly used a COM system have now replaced their microfilm and microfiche systems with a COM system. This is because COM systems are more compact, more flexible and more versatile than microfilm and microfiche systems. They can be used to store and retrieve data from a wide range of sources, including mainframe computers, word processing systems, and other data sources. They can also be used to create indexes and titles for the data, making it easier to find and use.

Two relatively new growth areas for COM are the use of graphic COM in Computer Aided Design (CAD) applications and the development of Word Processing Output Microfilm (WPOM). Recent years have seen a revolution in drawing office procedures brought about by the introduction of Computer Aided Design systems and this in turn has brought about a demand for a more permanent form of storage than the diskettes used in CAD systems.

As a result a number of companies



such as Imtec microfilm in the UK and the Dicom Corporation in the United States have developed graphic COM recorders which can take the output from a range of CAD stations. Instead of plotting it on paper they can plot it on microfilm, producing high resolution images on to aperture cards. In an even more specialized application, Dicom have introduced a slide composition system based on the use of their D148S graphics COM recorder which enables companies and design studios with their own graphic workstation to send their digitized images to a Dicom bureau where they can be recorded on 35mm colour slides for on-line presentations and so on.

Microfilm and microfiche have been used for many years in the storage and retrieval of data. They have been used for everything from business records to scientific data. They have been used for everything from business records to scientific data. They have been used for everything from business records to scientific data.

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devices and can be programmed to record at any one of a number of standard reduction ratios in a number of formats. Most rotary cameras and some planetary cameras now incorporate an automatic document feed unit so that standard documents can be filmed at high speeds without any operator intervention. Most roll film cameras can record a "flip" under each frame recorded on the film in order to facilitate the high speed retrieval of specific frames at an automated microfilm retrieval unit.

The trend to new processes and materials is best illustrated by two new updatable microfilm systems on the market, the System 200 from A. B. Dick which is based on the use of a transparent electrophotographic film and the Bell & Howell Microx system which makes use of photo-plastic film. Both systems operate like high reduction cameras. The user can view out a master microfiche from the film, select a frame location on the microfiche and record a document on to it and then refile the microfiche.

The whole process takes approximately 10 seconds and can be repeated any number of times until all the frames of a particular microfiche are full. In effect this makes the master fiche a compact paper folder where the information can never get in the wrong order and which can easily be duplicated and distributed at low cost. These flexible systems have found numerous applications particularly in organizations that have to maintain large files that need to be updated at regular intervals.

These improvements in the design of microfilm production equipment, when allied to similar developments in the design of microfilm reading and retrieval devices have created a major role for microfilm in active record storage and dissemination systems in addition to its traditional role as a cost-effective archival storage medium. But I would like to conclude this review of microfilm in the 1980s by looking at developments in microfilm technology.

Since its humble beginnings in the 1920s and 1930s, microfilm publishing has turned into a flourishing business that was worth some £40m a year in 1981 and the past few years have seen the announcement of a number of significant micropublishing projects. Research Publications has recently embarked on the first phase in its project to microfilm all the works listed in the British Library's computer produced Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue which will itself be available both on-line or on Computer Output Microfilm. As a result scholars will be able to interrogate the database on BLAISE and then read the full text on microfilm. Chadwyck Healey is also offering a computer-produced index to all British official publications not covered by HMSO with a microfiche back-up service so libraries subscribing to the index can order a microfiche copy of any of some 10,000 works listed in the index.

These two examples must suffice to illustrate the growing number of micropublishing projects that use microfilm to provide full text back-up to major computerized indexes. A second area of micropublishing with a lot of potential for the future is the use of colour microfilm to record historical manuscripts and other fine art treasures. Oxford Microform's collection of illuminated manuscripts from the Bodleian Library and Ormonde Publishing's collection of watercolours from the Victoria and Albert Museum prove two examples of what can be achieved with colour microfilm.

Looking to the future, the market for scholarly micropublications looks set to grow at a healthy rate, due to a number of factors. First, librarians and increasing space problems caused by similar titles in capital building programmes are finding that the purchase of microfilm publications is the only practical way of maintaining the present scope of their collections. Publishers too, faced with ever-increasing print costs and low print runs are looking much

more favourably at microfilm as a means of disseminating their work. Microfilm is a compact, permanent, and easy-to-use format that can be stored in a small space and retrieved quickly. It is also a cost-effective way of producing and distributing information. Microfilm is a compact, permanent, and easy-to-use format that can be stored in a small space and retrieved quickly. It is also a cost-effective way of producing and distributing information.

Assessing

Informed opinion asserts that the optical disc will not be in general use as a full-document storage medium before the end of the century. For this and other reasons, I predict a growing role for micropublishing. To commit myself even further, I reaffirm the sense of what I wrote in *The Times* in 1975, namely that our academic libraries will continue to be multi-media based, that is to say, they will stock and exploit for use books, periodicals, microforms, maps, prints, on-line services, tapes, discs and other formats. Each of these formats has proven merit for particular areas of library service and libraries will certainly continue to exist.

I am aware that a British university librarian has just published, with a title the academic equivalent of a tabloid press headline: "The end of libraries". Encapsulated in book form for the library market, be it noted, it is however, not as deviant as it would appear, for the concluding argument is just this point of the continuing need for multi-media libraries and the up-dating of our library schools. While the evolution of most of our libraries is taking place, the teaching in schools of librarianship may not, even yet, match our needs.

As in every other area of life, information technology will have ever increasing impact on libraries, for "tele-banking" and "tele-shopping" are already a reality. Present information applications are growing ever more sophisticated. There is a need, in our libraries, young trained professionals who will develop systems to apply microprocessor technology. It must be understood that microfilm and the earlier computer applications were a matter of imperfectly adapting available equipment to a library function. The microfilm technology (including microfilm production and retrieval) is a specifically systems analysis based package.

Realistically, it has always been recognized that micropublishing could well prove to be a sort of interim library technology that will become obsolete, but we are by no means at that point yet. Micropublishing, in particular, certainly does have a continuing and developing role, in some cases in harness with electronic retrieval devices. It is true that library users still do not willingly read a microform or use a VDU if a print on paper edition is available in the library and one joins them in preferring, even in loving the book.

However, needs must, for so much material is available only in microform either because micropublishing proves to be the only viable technique for a new publication or because limited demand means that the only way of making an out of print book available again is a microform re-issue. In this connection the new Whitaker's listing of out of print titles could be checked against micropublishers' catalogues and *Guide to Microforms in Print* in order to determine what should be re-issued in microform. Any micropublisher would be pleased to hear of such needs.

The number of British micropublishers has grown during the last few years. The names that spring readily to mind are: Chadwyck Healey Ltd, Emmott Microform, Harvester Press, Mindata Ltd, Microform Ltd, Ormonde Publishing Ltd, Oxford Microform, Publications Ltd, and World Microfilms. Publications Ltd, the sheer volume of material that has been published or re-issued in microform means that any bibliography in almost any subject that does not list some sources in microform is probably out of date.

If one needs an exact replica of an original document, a surrogate book, and printing is out of the question, then micropublishing remains the cost effective medium for achieving this. It is possible for a library, museum or archive, to use the question and promotion services of a micropublisher in order to share the

the impact of electronics in publishing

pleasure and utility of a unique treasure by micropublishing.

Glasgow University Library is about to celebrate (in April) the bicentenary of the Hunterian Collection by the publication of a text-fiche edition of its eleventh century *York Psalter* (Oxford Microform Publications Ltd). Oxford University Press is publishing for the Ashmolean Museum a text-fiche edition of *Tridentine Rarities*. This will have a printed introductory text and a computer generated laser printed translation and transliteration of the catalogue of specimens itself. The five microfiche will reproduce the manuscript of the original catalogue in Tridentine's own hand.

Dr Edward Gray, president of Microforms International Marketing Corporation, a leading micropublisher, has drawn my attention to an interesting indication of the conservatism of librarians. This is to be seen in the type of microform purchased, 35mm from an open reel is overwhelmingly the format ordered by librarians. This is the format that they started with, for their first problem was to be solved by the use of microfilm was the replacement of weighty and crumbling bound newspapers, and 35mm is ideal for newspapers, and 16mm is better for the majority of journals. At a later date, scientific, technical and business librarians, whose interest was space saving by holding journals on film, selected 16mm, which also facilitates electronic retrieval.

In my *Microform Librarianship* (Butterworths), and elsewhere, I have promoted microfiche as the most convenient format to use. It is interesting to consult the catalogue of the Microfilms International, which they note is not in the

where one discovers, for most titles available for dates up to the end of the 1960s, additionally there is 16mm from around 1970 and microfiche also for the most recent years.

In the area of consultation of archive material there has, of necessity, been a great extension of micropublishing. For the enormous growth of genealogy has made it essential to provide microform copies of the etc. all over the world in record offices and libraries. Micropublishing facilitates research by making available material that one could not publish in any other form, as for example: *Records of a Scottish Village: Lasswade, 1650-1750* (Chadwyck Healey).

Where an exact copy of actual documents is not essential, that is and replicated on a screen in approximate the original format, as for indexes, then, as the many successful online computerized services may indicate the appropriate way of meeting the researcher's needs. There is, however, a role for micropublishing in the storage, transmission and retrieval of this sort of data. In considering data bases one has to bear in mind both that the pricing structure of certain of them involves libraries in a full subscription to the printed service in order to gain reduced rate online searching facilities and also that they are, at present, imperfect tools.

Their imperfections lie not only in the incomplete, uneven and overlapping nature of their subject coverage but also in the amount of data they carry. Having called up a catalogue

library. The frustrating delay involved in interloan systems could be obviated by having full-text microfiche available. This involves moving data bases to data banks.

One suitable system is available, based on a conjunction of microform searching and micro-computer call-up for VDU display. Derwent uses this developed Video Pat search for patents including graphics. It should be emphasised that high density optical mass storage can be based either on optical data disc or on micrographics.

A highly successful area of application of microforms where there will be change is the catalogue. The present position is that the majority of library services have catalogues of their holdings (based on an internal machine readable bibliographic data base) stored on magnetic disc or revised complete catalogues on computer output microfiche for use by their readers. This application will gradually change over to on-line use of the same data, for two reasons. Firstly micro and mini computers are very much cheaper now than in the past and secondly libraries are already using such equipment to input their catalogue entries. On-line VDUs will thus eventually replace microfiche readers for catalogue consultation as prices continue to fall.

Developments in information technology are, indeed, reflected in the recent changes of title of the Micrographic Congress has transformed itself into the International

word microfilm into microform to indicate that its concern is not only with film. The Microform Association of Great Britain Ltd now has its secretariat at Dellfield, Pednor, Chesham, Bucks.

Conservation of the treasures in libraries and archives is a problem of escalating proportions. Decay of books and other paper-based documents of our heritage is proving to be of amazing rapidity. In addition to the treatment of paper and bindings, money must now be found to pay for microfilming on a vast scale. Microfilm, properly treated, has the great advantage of longevity. Electronic records such as magnetic tape and disc are ephemeral, subject to damage by handling, cigarette ash, electric currents in nearby wiring and equipment, citizen band radio, etc. The work of the American Bureau of Standards indicates varying rates of error in tapes stored from one to seven years.

Micropublishing has increased in significance in this recessionary period. As a result of severe cuts in the funding of academic libraries together with the endemic problem of space, the annual rate of input of bound volumes will be declining and that of microforms increasing. In general, we should not now be binding journals but systematically converting back-runs to microform, discarding of the volumes in all but exceptional cases.

It is possible that some librarians may have slowed their microform acquisition programmes in the mistaken belief that video disc technology is effectively about to meet their space saving needs. The two sides of an optical disc, in all probability,

And that's another thing - it now takes the equivalent of sixty thousand books to prop the bloody table up!



book a reader would temporarily take the other 319 books out of use. Indeed the high density factor was a major problem with ultrafiche at even considered for use in micropublishing nowadays.

The newer forms of information technology, then, will join the photographically based microforms in academic libraries for the variety of available predates multi-media libraries. Neither the book, nor the microform will be superseded by video and electronics based information systems for each has a continuing role side by side with the newer formats, which, by the turn of the century could well include optical character recognition devices.

S. John Teague

A selection from the catalogue of Research Publications Ltd

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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BASED ON THE EIGHTEENTH
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CATALOGUE - ESTC



Research Publications recently began filming on one of the most important microfilm projects ever undertaken - the creation of a collection destined to become the ultimate resource for information on the eighteenth century.

Based on a machine readable bibliography - the eighteenth century short title catalogue (ESTC) - the collection will contain every notable item printed in any language in Great Britain and its colonies, and printed in English anywhere in the world, between 1701-1800.

Consisting of approximately 200,000 books, pamphlets, tract books, broadsides, bibles and ephemeral materials, the collection has been selected from over 500,000 titles to include first editions, significant variant editions and all editions of all works of major authors, enabling scholars to make textual comparisons of their works.

The collection is being compiled and organised into units, each containing 35 microfilm reels made up from eight broad subject groups (language, literature, religion, history, science and technology, medicine, law, etc) with titles in random order within each group.

Bibliographic support will be available by on-line, search-only, machine readable files offered by BLAISE and RLGL/RLIN. Title lists, guides, indexes etc and the ESTC COM bibliography will also be available during the year.

Delivery will commence in 1983 with 10 units per year, increasing to 15 units from 1984 onwards.

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microfilm

Trends in equipment

While for some people the word "microfilm" may conjure up ideas of dusty archives and of viewing rolls of film on an antiquated microfilm reader, this is far from representative of microfilm's true image in 1983. It may be that the above picture is still not far from the truth in some isolated cases but microfilm, or microfilm as it is now more generally known, has come a long way since it was first used in libraries more than 50 years ago. While it is still used extensively in libraries it is now well established as an active information handling medium in all kinds of businesses, industry and government departments and seems well placed to complement the rapidly growing range of electronic information handling systems which are the product of the microchip revolution. Indeed, the current generation of microfilm hardware can be regarded as a part of that revolution.

The production, duplication and dissemination of the various microforms now in common use is generally a specialized operation and one for which a whole range of equipment, materials and techniques has been developed. The use of microforms, however, is far from a specialized operation and is something which an increasing number of people in a variety of situations are being involved. From the user's point of view microfilm equipment usually means microfilm readers and readers' printers although it may also include retrieval equipment, low-volume duplicators and certain types of cameras.

In essence, the current generation of microfilm readers are little different from the older ones in that they can be used for the same range of applications. One further consideration is that not only are they more attractive in appearance but they also offer a much higher level of performance.

The microfiche reader perhaps serves as the best illustration of the way reading equipment has been progressively developed and refined. (Microfiche readers sell in much greater numbers than any other type of reader and so they have naturally received a lot of attention from designers and manufacturers.) One thing which is immediately apparent is the greater use that is made of plastics, not only for the construction of the reader body but also for many of the other components.

Another significant area where advances have been made is in the illumination system, ie the various optical components which serve to illuminate the frame of film being viewed. In most microfiche readers the illumination system is now very compact, thanks mainly to the availability of small and efficient tungsten-halogen lamps. Whereas early readers tended to use 100 watt, or even 150 watt, lamps to achieve a satisfactory level of screen brightness, current readers can achieve equal and usually better performance with lamps rated at 50 watts or less. Such readers generate less heat and may therefore not require a cooling fan. This has allowed even greater compactness to be achieved as well as quieter operation.

The lenses used to project the image on to the screen have also been improved but what is probably equally important is that such lenses are now available at relatively low cost. This has undoubtedly been an important factor in encouraging the trend towards microfiche readers with a dual lens feature. The provision of two lenses which give different magnifications and which can be interchanged with a simple control enables a user to read microfiche made at different reductions; to use the same reader for each of the two magnifications; and to read microfiche made at more than one magnification. These readers are used mainly in business

users can be used for viewing 35mm aperture cards as well as microfiche at different reductions but they are inevitably of a more sophisticated construction.

Another discernible trend in microfiche reader design has been towards the more widespread use of modular construction. The majority of the major manufacturers now offer a range of microfiche readers, sometimes comprising as many as six or eight different models, which share a common base section but which have screens of different sizes and offer lens options and other facilities. In addition to screens of different sizes, these ranges of readers usually include models with front-projection screens as well as the more common rear-projection type.

Automatic frame retrieval is now available as an option on a number of the latest microfiche readers. Although the user has still to load the microfiche into the reader by hand, once this has been done the desired frame can be brought into view simply by keying in the frame coordinates on a keypad which may be either built



into the reader or connected via a short cable.

Interest in portable microfiche readers is as great now as it has ever been and the last two or three years in particular have seen the introduction of quite a crop of new models. The earlier have had a significant effect on the design of portables as compactness and cool operation are of even greater importance than they are with desk-top readers. The variety of portable readers now available gives the potential user a choice of specification, screen type, magnification and also the type of power supply, eg mains, external battery or internal battery. Owing to the constraints of their design, portable readers are rarely as convenient to use as conventional readers although some of the latest designs are perfectly adequate.

The last couple of years have also seen the introduction of several new and efficient microfiche projectors designed to project a much-enlarged image on to a remote screen for viewing by a group of people.

Before leaving microfiche readers the question of prices should be mentioned. While prices should be mentioned, it is very significant that at anything like the same time as the microfiche reader market has been expanding and that some models cost two or three years' ago. The microfiche reader market is very competitive. Readers for 35mm roll film have benefited from many of the technical advances which have been applied to microfiche readers but, because they are often required to have quite a large newspaper page at full size, there is not a lot that can be done to make them more compact.

The trend in 16mm roll film readers, which are used mainly in business

ness records applications, has very much been in the direction of automation with the result that readers which require the film to be threaded and advanced manually are rapidly becoming out of date. The current generation of 16mm readers accept cartridge-loaded film (usually the 3M type of cartridge or the more recent ANSI standard cartridge) which allows automatic film threading as well as giving some protection to the film when it is not in use. Film advance is motorized with variable speed control and image rotation is usually a standard feature. The ability to retrieve film frames automatically is rapidly becoming a standard feature on the more sophisticated equipment.

While most automated retrieval readers have the necessary sensing and control gear built in during manufacture it is now quite common for roll film readers and reader-printers not specifically designed for automated retrieval to be fitted in the field with the necessary equipment to upgrade them for automated operation. At the other end of the automation scale, the last couple of years have seen very rapid growth of interest in computer assisted retrieval (CAR) although the number of systems in use is still quite small—in the UK at least. In CAR systems the index to the information which has been recorded on film is held on a computer and can be interrogated by the operator via a VDU. The computer then responds with the address of the desired frame of information and, when the operator has loaded the specific cartridge of film in the microfilm retrieval unit, the computer "drives" the film to the particular frame.

Microfilm readers have been used for a long time to read microfiche and towards plain paper electrostatic copies of the sort which have been the norm in photocopyers for quite some time now. Until recently there were virtually no plain paper reader-printers available but not there are at least three machines on the market with the promise of others to follow.

While the plain paper machines may be stealing the limelight at the moment the other two print processes in common use—the direct electrostatic and dry-silver processes—still seem to have quite a bit of mileage left in them as far as reader-printers are concerned. Both processes can be operated on low-cost equipment—prices from around £800—and both can give very satisfactory results. The direct electrostatic process is still the most common process used in reader-printers and is notable for the high level of image definition that it can produce. Positive prints from either negative or positive images. It is most frequently used with a liquid toner solution although it is used in some of the latest Bell & Howell machines with a dry powder toner. The main advantage of the dry-silver process continues to be the fact that no chemicals have to be added to the reader-printer—the prints are developed purely by heat.

As reader-printers are fairly expensive items, especially the plain paper versions where prices start from around £2,500, users wanting to print from a variety of microforms cannot usually justify the purchase of a separate printer for each type. Manufacturers are therefore placing greater emphasis on designing universal reader-printers.

These electronic systems will certainly have an increasing influence on the way micrographic equipment develops over the next few years, and we can expect to see an increasing amount of automation together with greater integration with other technologies.

Roger N. Broadhurst

The author is head of evaluation in the National Reprographic Centre for Documentation at Hatfield Polytechnic.

microfilm

Conserving the printed word



microform should endure for as long as acid free paper which has a life expectancy of centuries.

But the benefits of microform to space saving, and to preservation, are attended by problems some of which dictate expensive solutions. In particular the library has been concerned with problems of storage conditions, production capacity and equipment substitution.

In order to create a national archive of newspapers on microfilm (since newspaper is the most important permanent paper category of all), marriage between the division's need to microform fragile materials for preservation and a share in revenue earning when the microcopies are sold to other libraries.

Much of the microform added to the collections is created within the division. The reprographic service has almost 40 camera stations operating and last year produced about 150 miles of microfilm negative (white on black) and about 230 miles of microfilm positive (black on white) to meet a combination of requirements. The Newspaper Library can claim to be the largest newspaper microfilming bureau in the country. Apart from the appreciable revenue earned from customers' orders the microfilming programme reduces potential storage needs by saving space at the Newspaper Library and helps to conserve, by providing microform substitutes, original printed and manuscript materials from further deterioration. The aim is to provide archival negatives from which working ("positive") copies, and indeed customers' orders, can be generated without refilting the original material.

More than 750,000 volumes in the Department of Printed Books are estimated to need conservation treatment and the most realistic and cost effective way of safeguarding many of these is to create microform copies. Many printed items contain from all parts of the world contain paper which is known to be particularly impermanent and the percentage of material on wood pulp paper in the collections is growing. The durability of this paper is brief when measured against an archival time-span. Rebinding, deacidification and laminations are costly processes for a great deal of modern published material in comparison with transfer to microform and its ability to reproduce copies for multi-site use or sale when copyright permits.

The objective of the microfilming programme is to replace impermanent paper with silver-based microfilm of archival permanence. Studies of deterioration, including artificially accelerated aging of film, indicate that correctly processed and stored

bookholders more cognizant of preservation needs, and the acquisition of reading equipment which is adequate optically and ergonomically.

Although the division also produces 16mm microfilm and microfiche its most considerable investment so far has been in 35mm microfilm largely because this can record most formats of material held by the division—including large format volumes and text where print is fading and legibility poor.

However, the market is geared principally towards commercial and office document copying and the provision of 16mm microfilm and microfiche. Too many manufacturers consider that there are insufficient economic returns in developing equipment specifically for library applications. In recent years the division's need has been to replace camera equipment which can attain a reduction ratio (30X) to film the enormous nineteenth century newspaper (particularly published in Ireland) and can provide a superior resolution for images.

In the end much of the replacement equipment had to be commissioned specially and was modelled on camera types developed over 30 years ago. At the same time an attempt has been made to enhance microform reading equipment, particularly for 35mm film. This has resulted in the purchase of models from (principally) United States manufacturers although certain small firms in the UK have produced models with library customers in view.

Some preference has been shown by readers for reading machines which project the image down towards the desk top but preference varies very much with individuals and can be influenced by changing background features and reading equipment.

The division also produces and acquires microfiche which is an excellent medium for some types of document recording and has very considerable advantages of storage density (though easier to lose and misfile in a library environment) but also has disadvantages for many uses in the reference division.

The increasing transfer to computer-aided cataloguing methods has entailed production of the division's catalogues on Computer Output Microform (COM) and the technology is also available for microfilm input to computer systems. The coming together of digital processing and reprographic techniques has led the library to create a staff post dealing with new reprographic technology which is concerned particularly with the boundaries where reprographic, computer and printing applications meet and is also sponsoring new equipment to the library's specifications.

Even if this is so conventional microforms will continue to play a large role in research libraries in the foreseeable future. There is thus still room for publishers to publish and re-publish in microform what they might not be able to afford in print. And scope also for manufacturers to provide hardware which will remove, for the future, some of the difficulties associated with using microforms, especially for researchers whose natural reactions are still too often a mixture of gratitude for the preservation and availability of research material coupled with physical and emotional irritations with the microcopies in which it is held.

I. P. Gibbs
A. B. Phillips
The authors are based at the British Library's reference division, Great Russell Street, London WC1.

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microfilm

How lenders make the most of microfiche

The British Library Lending Division has a considerable collection of research materials in microform and about 5 per cent of its acquisitions budget of £2.7m is spent on books, scientific and technical reports, theses and back runs of journals which are published in 35mm microfilm or on microfiche. The bulk of the division's collection of 157,000 serial titles and 4.5 million books and reports is however held as hard copy for ease of shelving, speed of retrieval and the convenience of users. Only in cases where price in relation to use makes the acquisition of hard copies prohibitively expensive is microform the preferred option.

Many libraries, including the British Library's Reference Division have turned to microform in an attempt to conserve their collections. However, until more backsets of serials and out-of-print books are

available from microform publishers the cost of conservation by filming will remain unacceptably high for those libraries, including the lending division, with limited conservation budgets. Before long however, it is likely that this technique will be overtaken by new technology, but whether optical video-disc recording, for instance, will eventually prove to be a cheaper as well as a more efficient medium remains to be seen.

The bulk of the microform material collected by the division is either 35mm roll microfilm or 145mm x 105mm microfiche produced to the NMA standard of seven rows of 14 frames at a reduction of 24x. Because of the relative ease with which enlargements can be made the division has generally preferred to purchase negative microform. Either diazo-based or silver film is acquired depending on the cost. The latter is preferred because of its archival qualities.

The collection of microforms currently numbers almost three million items most of which have been published as part of large series by a few major producers. The majority are research and development reports issued by US Government agencies such as the Department of Energy, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Educational Resources Information Centre and the National Technical Information Service.

All these organizations have been distributing their reports in microform since the 1960s and the division has developed a comprehensive collection. Also from the United States it has acquired film containing quired their entire output of doctoral

theses. Since 1978 however, items have been acquired only in response to demand. Another major series being acquired from America is the Congressional Information Service while from outside Europe the publications of the Food and Agricultural Organization swell the collection by 6,000 per annum.

In addition to ongoing series the library has been spending up to £50,000 per annum acquiring the one-off research collections published by such organizations as Chadwyck Healey, World Microfilms and Research Publications. They include such items as Sotheby & Co catalogues of sales 1734-1945; BBC Home Service nine o'clock news 1939-1945; the Papers of William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland; and French Revolutionary materials: the Maclure Collection, University of Pennsylvania.

A full list of the collections is given in *Microform Research Collections at the British Library Lending Division* available from the division's publications section. The Reference Division of the British Library also collects material of this kind and care is taken to ensure that unnecessary duplication does not occur and that items collected by one division may be made available through the services of the other.

Almost 1,000 square metres of storage space at BLD are devoted to microforms. Specially designed cabinets contain drawers which will hold either 66 boxes of roll film or four rows of microfiche. The main advantage of interchangeability is that series can be stored in their correct alphabetical sequence without need to reformat. This speeds up the combination of mobile cabinets and microfilm results in high density



Rows of storage racks maximize space

any material held as either microfilm or microfiche. Rank-Xerox Copyflo machines (providing paper copy from film at 20 per minute), an AM Bruning 1830 step-and-repeat microfiche enlarger and standard reader printers are used to make enlargements, while an AM Bruning OP 40 (capable of providing 800 copies per hour) and a GAF 1635 film copier are used to produce film/fiche duplicates.

Unless users specify otherwise, all requests for materials held in film or microfiche form are supplied as such. An increasing number of users are happy with such an arrangement and this reflects the fact that paper copies are expensive to produce and that more and more organizations are equipped with microform readers and reader-printers. Microfiche readers have improved greatly in quality over the years and the position with 35mm film

The 35mm film is held at Boston Spa and is copied on demand. Details of the theses are given in the library's monthly publication *British Reports, Translations and Theses*.

The division is also a publisher of microfilm. Utilizing the ability of computers to produce miniaturized film output, details of the library's serial holdings and conference proceedings - have been issued on COM. The former is known as KIST (Keyword Index to Serial Titles) and is updated at quarterly intervals while the index of conference proceedings covers the period 1964-81 and contains records of 148,000 conferences.

The BLD is "into" microfilm in a reasonably big way. Whether microfilm will continue to play an important role in the future will depend on the speed with which video disc and the electronic journal are introduced - may ensure that the boom in micropublishing, promised in the 1960s, will never actually arrive.

D. N. Wood

The author is head of collection of the British Library Lending Division.



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Tony Hendley

The author is head of information services at the National Reprographic Centre for Documentation.

microfilm

Evolution in the library

Microform now has an established role in the university library although neither to the extent expected by early enthusiasts nor in quite the ways that many have envisaged. Available information shows that spending by university libraries on microform is a tiny fraction of their total costs but it is difficult to imagine the operation of even the smallest library without regular recourse to microform.

Forty years ago, the "microform revolution" was being confidently predicted - the library would be contained in a filing cabinet and the book would be obsolete. This prediction has been fairly regularly repeated throughout the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s by one or another of the many enthusiasts for the medium. It is now clear that the technology that could realize the prophesies is available. It is still tantalizingly easy to become excited - or alarmed - at the potential of microform.

However, the academic is still absolutely dependent on the printed word in the way he records, retrieves and uses information - and achieves his status by it. There will have to be a fairly precise combination of circumstances before the revolution is likely to take place. So far we are experiencing an evolution rather than a revolution in the use of microform. Its qualities have been exploited to solve specific problems rather than create a total systems package for a complete library service.

From the 1930s and for the next two decades the use of microform was mainly confined to libraries and for archival purposes. The word "microform" covered it all - reels of 35mm film and cumbersome readers that had to be used in dim surroundings. The alternative was microcard which was even more unsatisfactory in use. Real developments in the microform world occurred outside the library world with the introduction of 16mm systems for office use - a complete package of camera, reader and indexing and retrieval of documents.

Another development was the aperture card - a punched card carrying a frame or more of microfilm that could be retrieved by electronic sorting. Together with the use of 16mm film the introduction of jack-knives converting film to microfiche permitted the updating of microfilm records thus allowing microfilm to be used in dynamic rather than static situations.

And then came the one development that brought microform back to libraries in the system context - the paper by Computer Output in Microform (COM) in either microfiche or film. Immediately an end product for the automation of library catalogues was available and the concept of those catalogues was freed from the confines of the card cabinet and the full potentials of automation could be exploited.

The automation of library catalogues is now a normal practice, as is the production in physical form on card, microfiche and microfiche forms in the 1970s and provided good evidence of the superiority of microfilm in almost every way - cost, ease of use and general convenience. The simplicity of the microfiche format was preferred to the film reel with its indexing problems (and greater cost of readers).

Fears for the loss of fiche have proved unfounded, although a daily inspection is required to maintain their correct order. One immediate advantage was the possibility of producing copies of the catalogue inside and outside the library. This introduced microfiche readers to public access in a much freer way. Because it is possible to obtain microfiche readers with dual lens capability both the needs of COM at x42 or x48 magnifications and of ordinary microfiche at x24 magnifications can be accommodated.

Bibliographic reference works eg *British Books in Print* now appear in microfiche helping to convert the librarian to a less grudging acceptance of the medium. By forcing the production of primary sources on microfiche, as was its virtue of making available material of a unique, or rare, or otherwise too expensive nature. Much of the filming had therefore to be accomplished by commercial agencies which operated in limited markets with little aggressive salesmanship. Early reading equipment left a great deal to be desired and the 35mm roll format has been a sufficient encumbrance to reinforce

on microfilm or microfiche with automated retrieval could be one of the promises of technology to libraries for the future. Once again it would appear that this will depend on initiative from outside the library world.

From the point of view of the university library's main holdings the resistance of the user has been understandably marked. In its first presentation the medium was seen as technology's promise to libraries as a rapid expansion of both information and universities and the main emphasis was on its space-saving qualities. In the event the space problem rarely proved to be that relevant and the promise was generally treated with apathy or even as a threat to the librarian's concepts as a curator of knowledge in printed form.

Microform saves space in storage of course, but if the information contained therein is required frequently by more than one person, then the problems of access and reading take saved all the space that has been earned to quite a large extent. Furthermore the scholar's need to browse the libraries of most universities or two, but how one would satisfy the 2,000 customers a day that even the small university libraries' experience is beyond imagination.

This is probably the reason why ultra-fiche which reduced by 192 times failed to make any great mark in libraries - so the Bible can be produced on a 2" square piece of film - so what? Again the early microcard editions of Parliamentary Papers and other similar reference collections were a standard feature of the university library buildings.

With an inhouse microfilm unit the cost and space advantages favour the microform but the question of copyright and the cost and control of the provision of hard-copy prints are still formidable features. The opportunities for making copies of fugitive material such as reports and theses are well accepted but, at the end of the chain, the user will have had a hard copy made as quick-



ly and as often as possible. This extends to the production of microfiche copies of research reports whose limited hard-copy editions are often exhausted. Over limited periods we have had encouraging results in a few special areas: the production of microfiche collections of trade catalogues of specific products relating to specific functions of foreign institutions; a microfiche collection of early horticultural catalogues; study packs of lecture notes and related references (this somehow died along with other attempts to introduce educational technology to university teaching).

We have twice handed to final year engineering students the project of designing a cheap, easy-to-use anywhere microfiche reader the lack of which is the greatest barrier to any form of real respectability being attained by microform in the scholastic world. There are some models that pass for portable readers but nothing equivalent to the pocket calculator or cheap cassette player yet exists.

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Microform is now a common feature of large office systems; the car service engineer turns to a microfiche reader to determine the part required; the maintenance engineer for the photocopying machine brings his manual with him in microfiche form. Careers offices, and travel agencies turn naturally to a microform reader in their daily operations. The microfilm industry is well-founded and the associated technology is already proven. Standards are well established; an independent research and advisory body exists.

It is doubtful if all of this would make too significant a difference to the library use of microform if our past experience is any guide.

J. H. Lambie

The author is librarian at the University of Bath.

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THI

Thursday

Tuesday

Wednesday

John D. Hargreaves

Tessa Blackstone

"In the present social and economic circumstances the arts, and the status of the artist, and the design of the environment, are all interrelated."

is also dangerous to assume that
tics from one polytechnic that
a suitable yardstick for art and
h nationally. The danger ex-

author is president elect of the
National Society for Art Education.
Arts and Higher Education.
Society for Research into Higher
Education.

Letters for publication should arrive by Tuesday morning. They should be as short as possible and written on one side of the paper. The editor

Applications of information technology

of power and silencing of opposition, they are not wrong. Here in the United States, the well trained new PhD who does not toe the party line is likely to find himself jobless; in

Sincerely,
THOMAS D. CRAVENS,
Department of Spanish,
Italian and Portuguese,
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences,

new merged institution will be as high.
Yours sincerely,
Dr T. J. PITCHER,
Lecturer in Zoology,
University College of North Wales.

George Livingstone
The author is chairman of the Association of Lecturers in Colleges of Education in Scotland.

1. *Introduction*